THE SPHERE

Vol. CLXX No. 2227 WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE GRAPHIC SEPTEMBER 26 1942

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SYMBOLS OF ENDURANCE

Volume CLXX No. 2227 The SPHERE, London, September 26, 1942

THE SPHERE
With which is incorporated "THE GRAPHIC"
The Empire's Illustrated Weekly

BRITAIN'S NEW HEAVY INFANTRY TANK, THE CHURCHILL, IS LANDED FROM A T.L.C. and moves off at speed over rough ground: A scene during battle manœuvres in Britain—*(This is one of the first pictures to be released showing the new tank in action)*

All the world has known of the existence of the Churchill tank: details of its construction were announced by the Prime Minister himself during the Commons War Debate in the opening days of July. But, until now, no pictures of the World's Best Tank (as Mr. Oliver Lyttelton described it a few days ago at Sheffield) were available. Above, and on page 388 of this issue, are published the first photographs of the new Churchill. So heavily armoured is this new Heavy Infantry tank that it can be used as a pill-box: but it also possesses a speed over land which is startling. Six-pounder guns (in place of the old 2-pounders) give the new tank a formidable fire-power. The picture reproduced here was taken during recent battle manœuvres in Britain, when the Churchill was used in conjunction with tank-landing craft of the type employed at Dieppe

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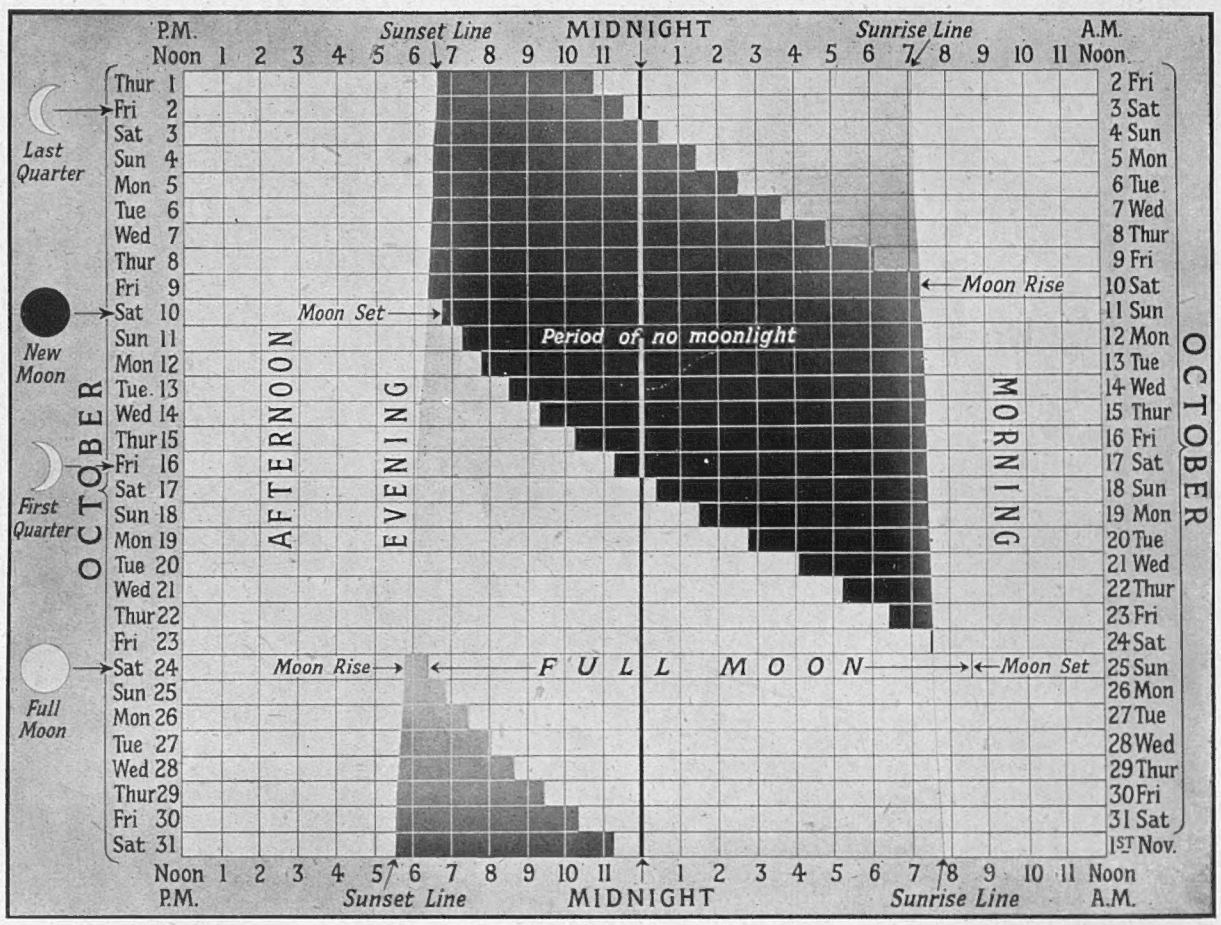
A WAR NEWSLETTER —No. 160

1, NEW OXFORD STREET, W.C.1.

A Word of Cheer.— He would be rash who prophesied that we have reached the peak of mental suffering which this war can achieve. Nevertheless, it is difficult to exaggerate its intensity and worth while examining its cause. It has been of late deeper and more widespread than in the darkest days of Dunkirk and the "Blitz." It is not, and never is, the *nearness* of death and danger which causes the acutest mental anguish. It is apprehension or *conscience* which brings it in acutest form. The mental misery of these dark months is due more than anything else to a (largely unjustified) feeling that we are not doing enough to help Russia. We, like Stalin, in our acute anxiety and sympathy, are not convinced by Mr. Churchill's irrefutable logic, and in a sense we have more excuse. (Stalin at least had the statistics shown him; we have not.) It is still amongst us a vulgar belief that we are fighting Germany; the Great Democracies, Russia and China, against Germany, a Germany blockaded, hedged, worn down and pinched to danger point. (Italy . . . pooh! Japan? . . . a side issue of recent date.) But—almost the whole of Europe lies open to the Nazis, to comb of its vast resources. Even to-day Axis serfs find armies for the Russian and other fronts equal in number to the Nazi armies kept mobilised for eventualities in the whole Western theatre. Still the Nazis are in a posture to increase their home rations, in meat and bread; still they can manufacture locomotives for export (with the aid of 6,000,000 foreign workmen); still they can find new divisions, admirably equipped with the latest engines of war, for Stalingrad. If we were "fighting Germany," these unpleasant surprises would indeed be impossible in September 1942. But we are fighting most of Europe *vis à vis* its material resources, which are yet by no means exhausted, and we are fighting Germany plus auxiliaries in man-power surpassing the great Continental armies of earlier wars. The prophecies and forecasts of the Air Ministry, the Ministry of Economic Warfare and of Information have all contributed to the painting of a false picture. Yet it gives no grounds for sharp criticism. We are all amateurs still, but so are the Germans. The darkness is no lighter for them. The war of attrition is grinding them down, as it is grinding the Allies. This war, first and last, is a war of attrition, as in 1914-18. There is more meat and fat on Allied than on Axis bones. Where we have been led astray is in the estimate of the size and number of Axis bones. We have underestimated the time factors. This has cost us recently a needlessly heavy weight of mental suffering.

Night or Day Bombing.— Cologne or Augsburg? It interested me to read the other day an authoritative hint that, after all, cocksureness about our bombing policy may be shorter lived than seemed probable a few weeks ago. It was stated that the authorities were re-examining very carefully the whole policy of bombing in the light of experience and by the aid of statistics covering the most successful of our own night-and-day raids and the promise and performance of American daylight raids by Fortresses and similar craft. There are a few people in this country who will not listen to any arguments in favour of night bombing. It is difficult to blame them, as it is difficult to blame an honest C.O. But there are very few people in Britain who, however much they detest night bombing for its obvious high percentage of inexactitude, do not condone it as a hideous necessity in our hour of crisis . . . and Russia's. What else can we do . . .? A high percentage of Britons would doubtless be thankful if experience and statistics were to satisfy all combatants that from the purely military standpoint, day bombing *paid* better than night bombing—that is to say, produced better results at less cost of air personnel and craft. If that conclusion emerged, the next step would be the improvement and perfection of day-raiding craft and strategy, and then presumably night bombing would decrease as day bombing methods improved. We are far from that stage at present. The findings are yet to be found. I am among those who take the middle, perhaps illogical or wobbling, course. I regard night bombing as sheer bestiality, but a bestial expedient in a crisis like the present, and only justified, then, because the Nazis began it. If proof were forthcoming that night bombing paid a lower military dividend than day bombing, then nothing could remain to excuse night bombing in my eyes. Since this war began, I have tried to be honest and, at least morally, courageous about my views. Though my own views are ill-informed and worth nothing, to a limited extent even they have been censored or pared down from public policy. Honesty compels me to add one more rider. Bestial as the expedient of night bombing is, I am convinced that it has played a signal part in refining and tempering to steel our war effort. In so far as we have suffered under it, it has done more than any other war evil and trial to give to us as a nation a spirit of unity, brotherhood, resolve, courage and endurance. There has been no "Repington Circus" in this war; no one has "had a good war"; we have been redeemed and saved, steeled and united by the ever-present sense of the nearness of death and the consciousness of equality of sacrifice.



"THE SPHERE" MOONLIGHT CHART FOR OCTOBER

For the first week of the month the waning moon will be seen in the skies during the early morning hours after its last-quarter stage on the night of the 2nd. The period of total darkness increases, and the new moon stage is reached on the night of Saturday the 10th, after which the nights get increasingly lighter, the moon showing its first quarter on the 16th. Eight nights later the moon is at its full, rising at about sunset and setting an hour after sunrise. During the whole of that evening and night there will be no period of total darkness

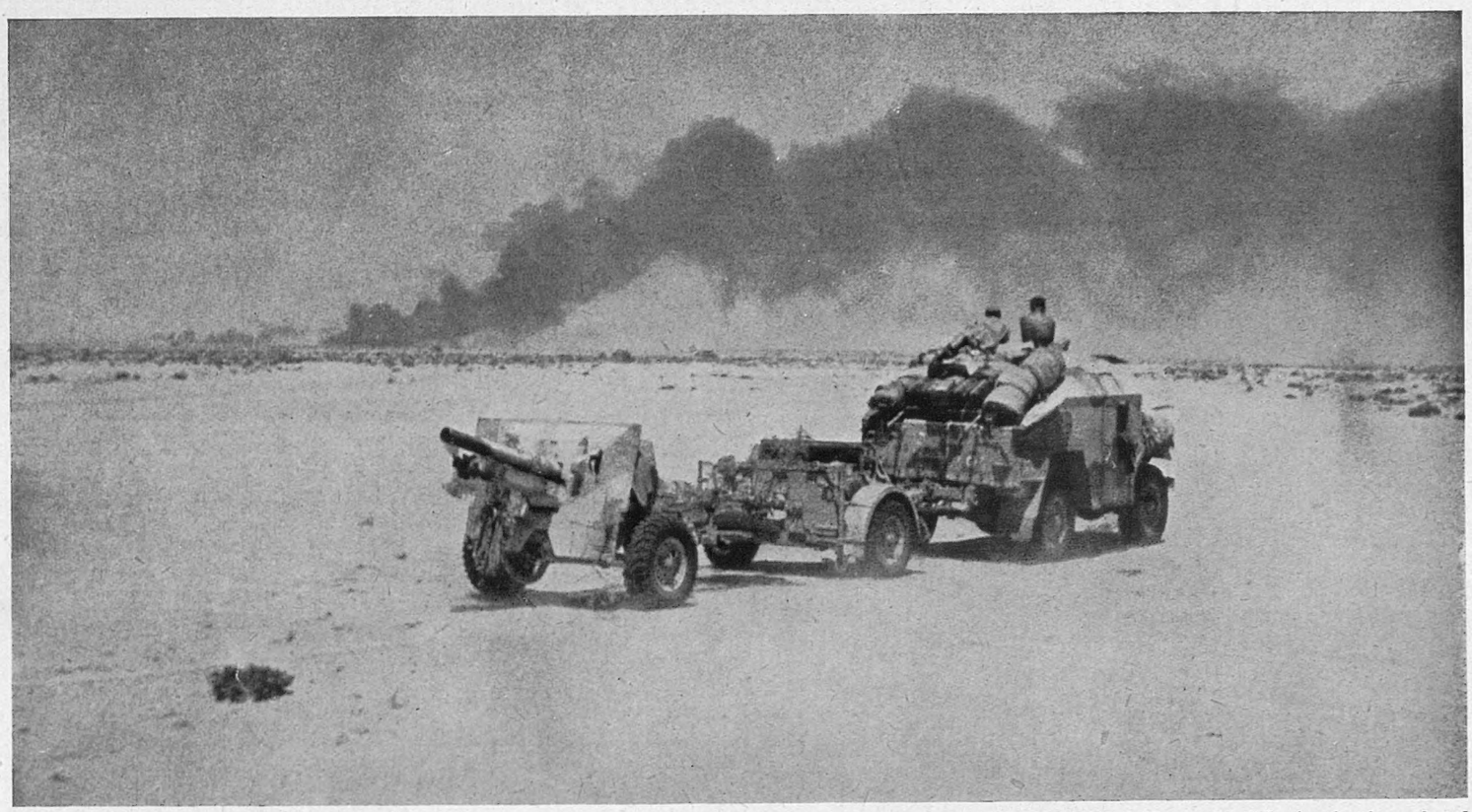
A limited number of these charts will be supplied free of charge on application to the Publisher, "The Sphere," Commonwealth House, 1, New Oxford Street, W.C.1, but 2½d. in stamps must be enclosed with the application

If . . .?—I often read in the Press statements by pundits in this sense: "If the Germans should resume intensive night bombing on our cities. . . ." The element of doubt, which these pundits suffer to remain in their prognostications, bewilders me, a confessed ignoramus. I should have supposed that if any one thing was as certain as that day will follow night, *that* is. Night bombing has been proved, time and again, the No. 1 inspirer of vengeance and reprisal, as it has been proved, in Germany as well as in Britain, the No. 1 inspirer of resolution and cementer of differences and doubts in the civil population. Latest neutral reports from journalist observers in the Reich unanimously confirm that citizens in the much-bombed German cities are standing up far better to these intensive raids of 1942 than to the sporadic raids of earlier days. Few people here question the necessity for these intensive night raids of ours. The dislocation they cause to the Nazi war effort may be exaggerated. I am prepared to believe it is considerable, because I do not know anything about it. I accept it always as a necessary expedient, and one which our hard-pressed Russian ally approves. But it is impossible for me to accept the slightest element of doubt that it will reap as fierce a whirlwind as the Nazis can compass, and as soon as they can launch it. General Sikorski recently prophesied that, for various reasons, that whirlwind would fail to reach maximum gale force. It may be so. The Nazi air peak may have been passed. Our peak may have surpassed theirs, in attack and defence. What is certain to my mind is that at the first possible moment, when the Russian campaign allows it, the Nazis will mass in the west as many squadrons of bombers and fighters as they can spare from every front, to resume to the utmost of their power, with every new device which experience and imagination can conceive to enhance severity and surprise, intensive raids on Britain; with revenge and reprisal as the first and guiding motive, and dislocation of our war effort as a secondary consideration. The Germans are a vile race. It is childish to pretend that they are not also a *virile* race. The nature of night bombing makes it a certainty that a virile race will answer blow for blow, Coventry with Cologne, and Cologne with a Coventry-with-nobs-on. *How many* nobs will depend solely on the resources available this winter to the Nazis. The length of the campaign will be determined by a profit-and-loss account and the percentage of nightly losses of invading craft. The vengeance will continue until statistics counsel prudence. For what race of men, however vile, if they be virile, will not seek vengeance and return blow for blow in this unspeakable and now inexorable vendetta which the Nazis invented?

The Old Stagers.— A quiet, war-centenary festival. How different it would have been in peacetime! In March 1929 I attended the Lord Mayor's dinner to I Zingari, given by the second Lord Mayor of London to be a member of I.Z. It was in the hungry '40's that three cricket and dramatic amateurs were satisfying their hunger (which I can testify was always remarkable) at the Blenheim Hotel in Bond Street. In that convivial hour, I Zingari was thought of, born and launched. The three diners were my great-uncles Freddie and Spencer Ponsonby and J. L. Baldwin. "The Old Stagers" was the dramatic sister of the cricket gipsy, a natural development which owed much to the triumvirate of I.Z. and much to some co-opted friends. What I.Z. and The Old Stagers have meant to cricket, Kent, Canterbury and our common heritage of jollity and decency, social historians have tried to tell and will have more to tell. The Old Stagers were born on September 10, 1842, as I believe. Brother and sister have played on the green and on the boards during a century of our chequered history, and even after 1914-18 came from darkness through blood to light and jollity once more. Black, red and gold. I.Z. came back in 1919 with our War leaders recruited to its ranks as honorary members—an honour none of them underrated—and the sons and daughters of the original Old Stagers took over the famous epilogue and sustained the parts, new and old. The spirits of Kent and of I.Z., and of cricket, revived. God send they revive again before long.

THE OLD STAGER

AFTER ROMMEL'S ABORTIVE DRIVE IN EGYPT

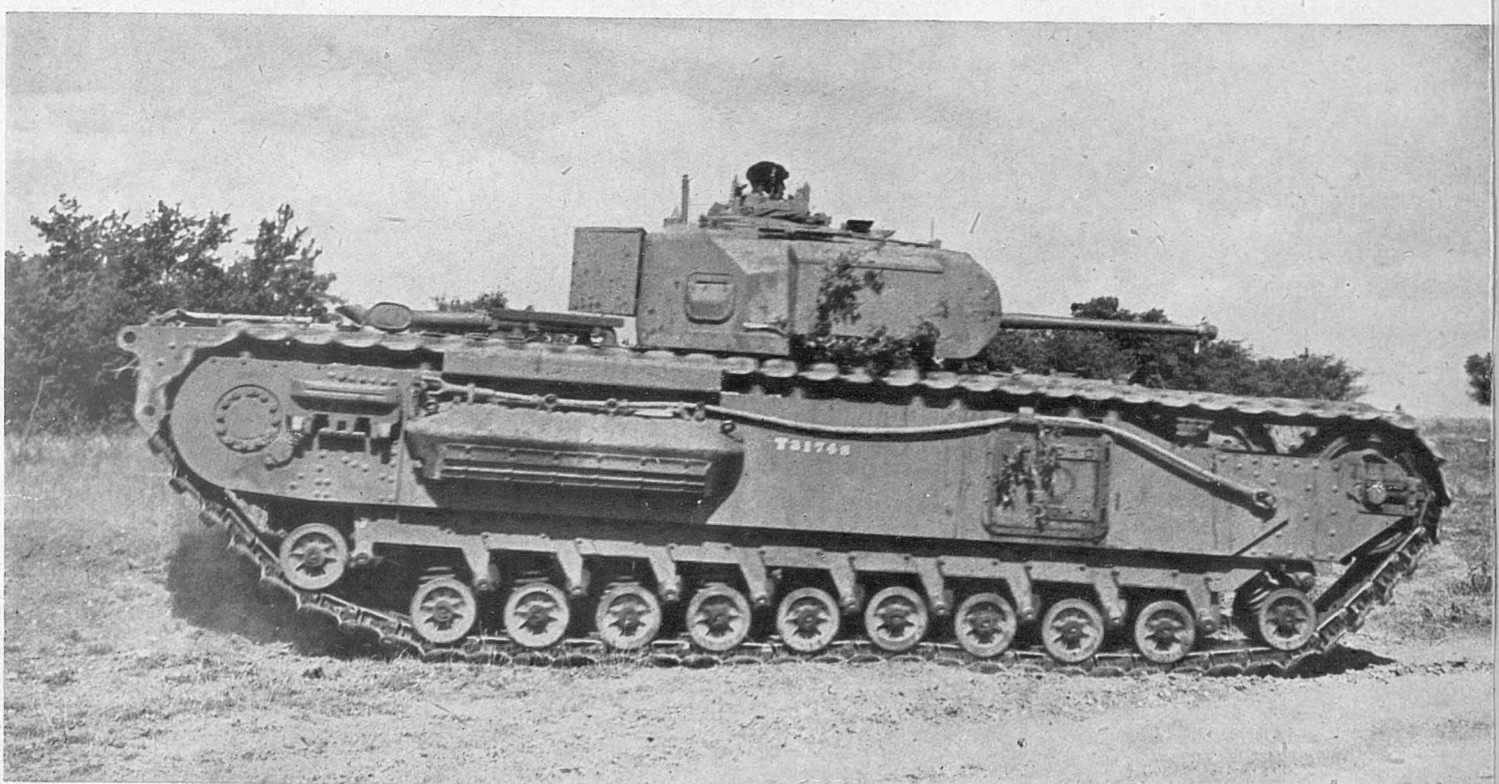


THE 8TH ARMY PURSUE THE RETREATING ENEMY AFTER THE COLLAPSE OF THE GERMAN ATTACK AT EL HEMEIMAT: A British 25-pounder following in the wake of the Germans. The smoke from destroyed enemy vehicles can be seen on the horizon: on the lorry are equipment and ammunition and supplies for the gunners: gun, limber and lorry are all camouflaged for desert conditions

FIGHTING IN THE DESERT AROUND EL HEMEIMAT DIED DOWN AFTER THE WITHDRAWAL OF ROMMEL'S FORCES, but there are still many signs of the battle. This picture shows one of the scenes of conflict. Guns are being recovered in the background by specially-equipped units of the 8th Army: in the foreground a British soldier is examining a knocked-out enemy truck—one of many enemy vehicles littering the battlefield

FIRST PICTURES OF THE NEW CHURCHILL TANKS: And Other Important Army Equipment

A PHOTOGRAPH, THE FIRST TO BE RELEASED FOR PUBLICATION, OF BRITAIN'S NEW TANK, THE CHURCHILL, now in use with Canadian troops in England. It was this fighting vehicle which the Germans declared was used in the great raid on Dieppe, in which Canadian troops played the greatest part



ONE OF THE NEW CHURCHILL HEAVY INFANTRY TANKS ON MANŒUVRES IN BRITAIN: It is so strongly armoured that it can be used as a "pill-box," if necessary; and it possesses a surprising turn of speed. There are various versions of this formidable vehicle

During the Commons Debate on the Conduct of the War on July 1 and 2, the Prime Minister had some illuminating remarks to make in connection with British tanks and tank output: "How do you make a tank?" he asked. "People argue about it, design it and make it. Then it is taken out, tested and re-tested. When you have got it settled you go into production—and only then. . . . Shortly after the present Government was formed I called a meeting of all the authorities to design and make a new tank capable of speedy mass production and adapted to the war conditions to be foreseen in 1942. All the highest expert authorities were brought together several times and made to hammer out a strong and heavy tank adapted primarily for the defence of this island against invasion but capable of other employment in various areas. The 'A 22' was ordered off the drawing-board and large numbers went into production very quickly. As might be expected, it had many defects and teething troubles, and these becoming apparent, the tank was appropriately christened 'Churchill.' These defects have now been largely overcome. I am sure this tank will, in the end, prove a powerful, massive, serviceable weapon of war. . . . It must be remembered there is at least six months' lag between sending a tank from this country and its arrival in the desert. But I sent two of them out to Egypt, where they could be tested and tried." Earlier in the same debate, Mr. Oliver Lyttelton, Minister of Production, had also referred to the Churchill tank. It was a new development, he said, which was started after the collapse of France. He added the interesting detail that the A 22's, or Churchills, were now being armed with 6-pounder guns instead of 2-pounders. This is the fighting vehicle of which the first pictures released for publication are given above

THE 2-IN. MORTAR IN USE IN THE FIELD IN A SURPRISE ATTACK: This is one of the many specialist weapons which are now coming into general use amongst the infantry of the British Army. The above picture shows how the mortar is operated by two men

Until recently the 2-in. mortar was a specialist weapon used only by the two mortar-men of a platoon. Now, however, it has become a platoon weapon, and each member learns to fire it. Two men of the Royal Scots Fusiliers are here demonstrating its use during a surprise attack. The mortar is placed in position, but no clamps are used: the "firer" rests his body on the base plate, and the barrel is held in the left hand and is directed on to the target. The "firer," with practice, can get his bombs on to the target within thirty seconds

A ROYAL ARTILLERY MOUNTAIN-BATTERY training in Scotland: Preparing for action, showing component parts of a gun being lifted from the pack-mules and assembled during a demonstration which was witnessed by Allied officers and British infantry

THE ARMY'S NEWEST CORPS—The Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers: This Corps comes into being on October 1 next; it will then be responsible for Army mechanical maintenance, including the recovery and repair of tanks in action. When the administrative details are completed, the men allocated to this Corps will be officially transferred. The R.E.M.E. will be made up of the entire mechanical engineering side of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps, all the maintenance personnel of the Royal Army Service Corps (except those serving in transport platoons and workshop platoons), and part of the mechanical maintenance personnel of the Royal Engineers. The picture above was taken whilst members of the new Corps were recovering a heavy tank from a tank-trap, with the aid of one of our largest tank-carriers

A VISIT TO THE LUCKIEST REFUGEES

The Breton Fishermen of the West Country Who are Now Established in One Corner of Cornwall which They Have Made Their Very Own. With a Note on the Nazis' Present Treatment of Brittany in Occupied France

By FERDINAND TUOHY

SEARCH Europe, and you will have difficulty in finding luckier refugees from Hitler than the Bretons in Cornwall. Not many in number, counting women and children and adopted Breton sons of the Fighting French Navy, they represent about as complete a transplantation of wartime fugitives as one can imagine. As far as exile from a loved province, held in horrid grasp, can be approximated to what has been lost, these Breton fisherfolk have got it.

A gnawing home-sickness, of course, pervades all, yet the men fish the sea for a living, as they were wont to do. They get as good English money as ever they got French, for their catches are snapped up. They return to charming little ports, which might have been cut from the coast of Brittany, to cobbles and odours, and to cottages where fish, onion-and-potato stew, and rough cider, are the stand-bys, even as they used to be a hundred-odd miles across the water. If absent relatives and friends far outstrip those present, here is the same "shop" and sense of companionship. They keep in touch with the outside world through London's *France* and the B.B.C. in French. The children go to school, the women go marketing, and for them, too, the curé is at hand—most Breton fishermen are inclined to be what the Tories would presumably now call "nothingarian."

They move among Cornish people who are allies by race, and some of whom used to cross to the Gallic festivals in Brittany: a friendly ambience which is augmented by the erstwhile common tongue making for mutual comprehension. Any difference between the Cornish and the Breton climate (no small matter with refugees) is for once decided in favour of England over France. To crown matters, these fortunate ones can say with a lighting of the eye: "*On est libre ici. Et puis les gens sont si gentils.*"

Yet one absentee there is: the hard-drinking, noisy and friendly, card-playing estaminet where the men were in the habit of passing some of their best hours. The "local" hardly deputises. The fisherman's places in Brittany often kept open from six in the morning until midnight, ever ready to cheer and sustain returned crews. The Cornish pubs are so parched that few average more than an hour, or maybe two hours, a day open, when there is nothing to offer the Bretons that will give them an ant's kick compared with their normal tonic: *fil*, a crudish fire-water, seen on its way by hard cider or red wine.

In association with the estaminet one thought of another absentee, the annual *Pardon*, since these saintly, summer-time, indulgence festivals all over Brittany, if they belong to religion, used to promote the biggest rural fiestas in Western Europe.

Perhaps the Bretons came as near as ever they will on this side to the atmosphere of a *Pardon* on the occasion of Cornish-Breton fêtes which drew a representative company from London that included Admiral and C.-in-C. Auboyneau, General Sicé (Health) and M. Soustelle (Information), of the French National Committee. Packed into thirty-six hours were Franco-British parades by the three Services, a Woolton banquet and a High Mass; dancing in costume by Breton girls, folk-songs, an address in Breton by Grand Bard Norton Nance, of the Cornish Gorsedd, Technicolor films of Cornwall, and of the last Gallic reunion at Vannes in 1939, a visit to St. Michael's Mount, a reception by Lord-Lieutenant Bolitho (at once raised to the peerage by the visitors), and much goodwill on the promenade and in the "locals," which were to remain closed in Saharan lack of stock for forty-eight hours after the *matelots* had departed. The *matelots'* thirst for a café atmosphere had been such that two of their number had to summon them to events by going from inn to inn giving martial bugle calls on the pavement.

In happier days, with the painting colony strongly in evidence, such fêtes would have been bumper affairs on this historic rendezvous ground of the two nations, where they certainly come closest. But the attempt to re-create an atmosphere of Breton fête in present circumstances produced too strong a nostalgia. One's thoughts travelled constantly just over the Channel to September Brittany, its loveliest month, and to what was going on there now. One conjured place-names—Bréhat, Tudy, Pentrez, Port-Navalo—only to come to sad full-stops. Particularly with the younger element. The easiest conversation was with the old Breton hands, a fair sprinkling of whom are from a wild spot indeed picturesque value, even these times. Never having seen it before, I was fortunate in seeing it now, with scarce a car on the road in a headland which, I learnt, used to be hopelessly overrun by traffic at this time of year. The surviving buses are even having to do postal and delivery-van duties like the diligence of old. I pointed this out to the *matelots*, who agreed that Cornwall was a *beau pays*, though not so *beau* as their *Bretagne*. Had they seen Sennen, Porthcurno, Marazion? No, but here one had to search out beauty spots in a confined area, whereas Brittany's coastline, and often inland too, was studded with beauty and interest for 300 miles, from Avranches right round to Vannes. Those *matelots* were going off to be the guests of Lord St. Levan on St. Michael's Mount, whose family standard, indicating residence, suggested a feudal survival to them. Very interesting . . . but to suggest equality with Mont St. Michel?

Cornwall's Bretons expect to be the first back in France when the Germans are dealt with. It will be one more voyage, the most memorable, of the sequence of journeys to and fro made by Cornishmen and Bretons down the centuries. As General Sicé observed apropos the migration of Cornish folk to France: "To-day, here we Bretons are in Cornwall, whence we shall depart for the reconquest of Brittany. For us to nail every German on the spot!"

Meanwhile, the occupying Nazis have tried, and apparently failed, to capitalise Brittany's long-standing desire for an autonomous system divorced from Paris over-centralisation. Annexed to France in 1532, Brittany was divided into five departments at the French Revolution. But the home-rule campaign never flagged, and it is interesting to note that an uncle of General de Gaulle (not of Breton stock) was a leader after the war of 1870. To this day, one in every three of the 3,000,000 inhabitants of Bretagne Bretonnante (Côtes du Nord, Finistère, Morbihan), keep their own tongue, and many of their traditions. I remember writing in 1936 of a visit to "the Red Virgin," who was a leader of the Gwen ha Du Society, of how this plain lass was working in with a youthful Breton National Party that had emanated from the last war, and whose denizens chiefly put dynamite to monuments commemorating the French link and the constraining poor Duchess Anne.

Just before this war, the Nazis got hold of two of these young Breton Nationalists, Mordrel and Debeauvais. The French Courts sentenced the pair to death in their absence, and with the capitulation they returned with the Nazis to Brittany. And in July 1940 the Germans announced an independent Brittany, to be ruled by a German Governor-General. Whereupon old Bishop Duparc, of Quimper, had this message read in every church: "Despite differences which are our own business, four centuries of common national history have intimately strengthened links which bind us to France. Our blood generously poured out on land and by sea (240,000 dead in 1914-18) has proved to her our ardent loyalty. Our intellectual, social and economic life has been constantly mingled with hers. We gave her the example of a strong and tender religious life. She in return helped us to develop still further our apostolate. We are indissolubly linked with France. We shall not betray her in the hour of her grievous trial. A Breton never betrayed."

This moved Vichy to object to the German plan as being contrary to the Armistice, and it was disclaimed by Berlin, though only, in fact, put away.

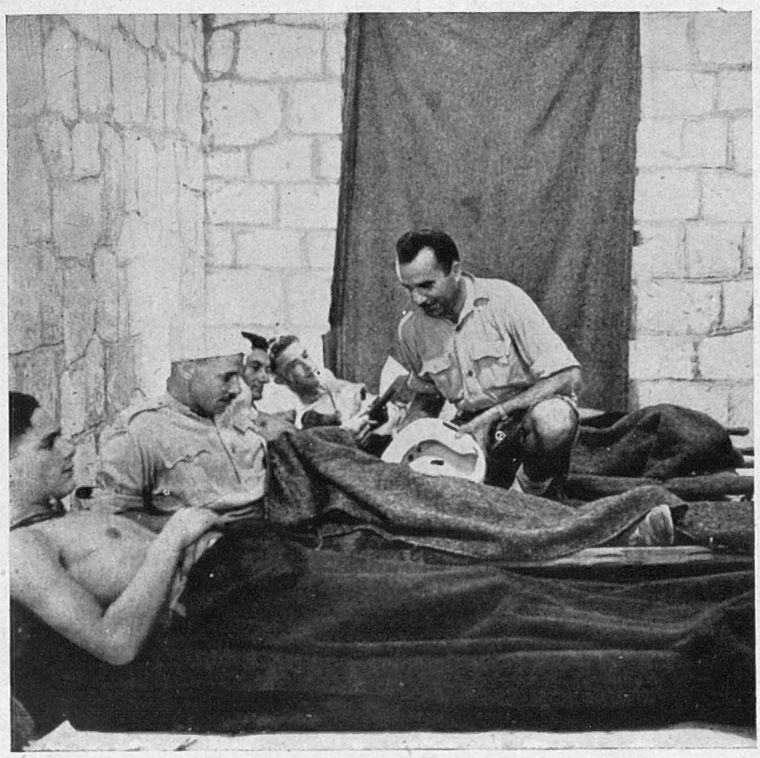
Next, Pétain, taking his cue from his mentor, Maurras, came out for Breton Regionalism, but with the bloomer of cutting off the Loire-Inférieure, with its capital Nantes, from Brittany; and the Nazis fastened on to this as "Vichy's sabotage of Brittany's personality." That was eighteen months ago. This summer Vichy returned to the wooing of Brittany through the agency of old man Maurras, who promised a variety of concessions in return for the usual blind obedience to the Marshal. As is known, the keystone of Pétain's "revolution" is a return to provincial regionalism as this existed under absolute Louis XIV, and Brittany chances to be one of the very few parts of France where such a revival fits in with not negligible local aspirations. This became manifest at an unusually solemn *Pardon* at St. Anne d'Auray in July, when for the first time the religious and civil authorities met together. Even the Prefect and the Bishop of Nantes were there, and this was taken as Vichy's recognition of previous error in eliminating the Loire-Inférieure.

But the Paris Nazis didn't like the way Pétain was asserting himself in Brittany, so they dug up a Grand Druid of Armorica, one Jaffrenon, by way of a counterblast. That traitorous rag, the *Matin*, published a series last month in an effort to fan anew the Breton claim to independence. In answer to the question: "What do the Bretons want?" the Grand Druid declared that they wished for a modern interpretation of the Breton franchises as figuring in the 1532 Act of Union. They wanted Breton-speaking Civil Servants, "autonomous administration of our material and moral interests, and an administrative federalism within the framework of the French nation." But, to the *Matin's* certain chagrin, "there is no question of separation." The Grand Druid (as Bishop Duparc before him) gave his allegiance to Pétain, while admitting the existence of de Gaullist sympathisers in Brittany, not surprising of a province formerly as known for its anti-Fascism as for its clericalism. And there the position rests.

The high number of Bretons among the Fighting French do, indeed, correspond to strong de Gaullist sympathies among Bretons of all descriptions. Plucky young Bretons who trickle across the Channel tell of the majority feeling which the B.B.C. follows up in Breton. Over here Bretons have their "Fidel Armor" Club in Westminster, and their own periodical *Sao Breiz* ("Brittany Arise!"), and through one of the ablest of the National Committee, René Pleven, himself a Breton, Fighting France makes a keener bid for the Brittany of to-morrow than any fossilised Pétain or Maurras.

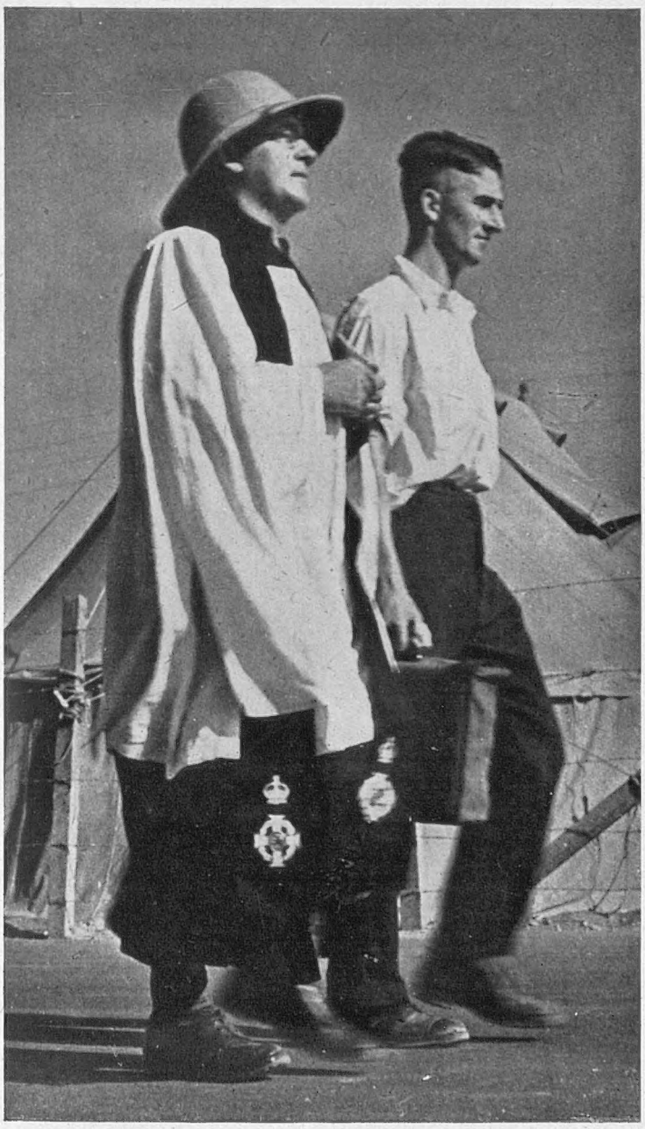
BLESSING THE FREE FRENCH FISHING FLEET: Down in the harbour of a little south-western town the fishermen are gathered for that most French of all customs, the Blessing of the fishing-boats by the priest—the simple ceremony that in peacetime would have been celebrated all over France

IN A FIELD HOSPITAL IN EGYPT

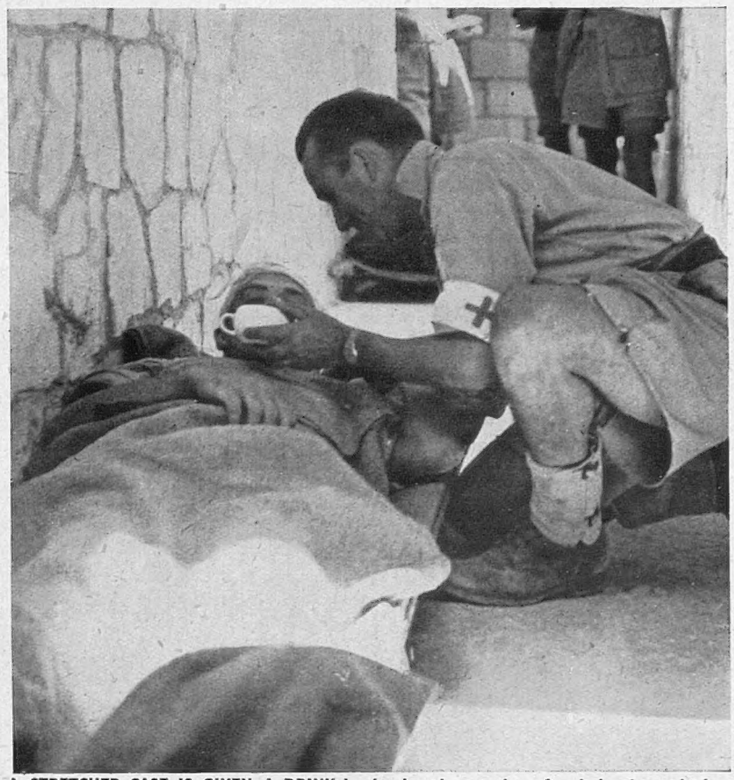


THE UNDERGROUND DRESSING STATION AT EL ALAMEIN : One of the wards where casualties are attended to by South African doctors

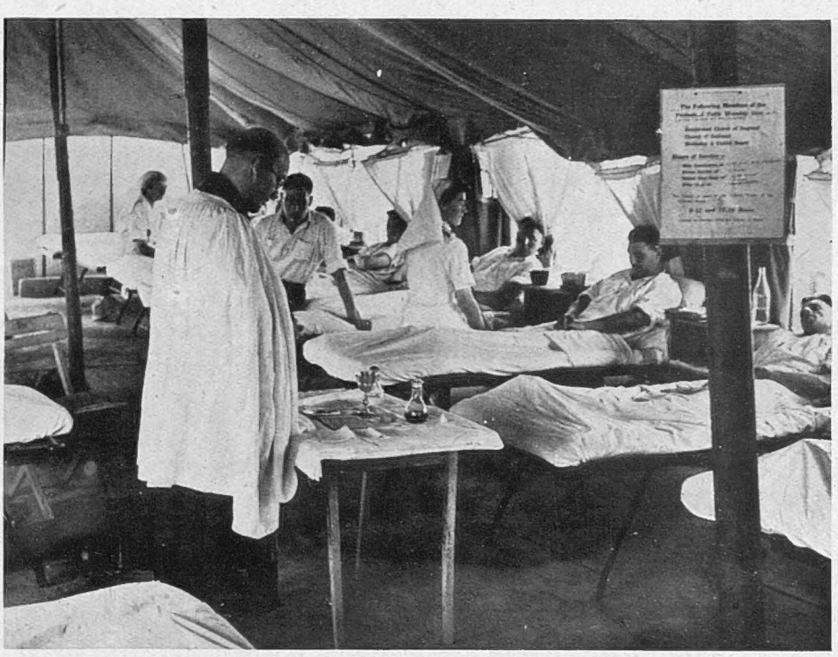
An Advanced Dressing Station in the Alamein area was so exposed to shell-fire and to bombing that it was decided finally to move the whole Station underground. A series of rooms were therefore constructed below the earth-level, and these have formed an ideal First-Aid Post and Dressing Station, giving complete protection to doctors and patients. The Hospital is operated by the 18th South African Field Ambulance Unit : it has attended to many hundreds of cases since the British retirement to the Alamein line at the end of June



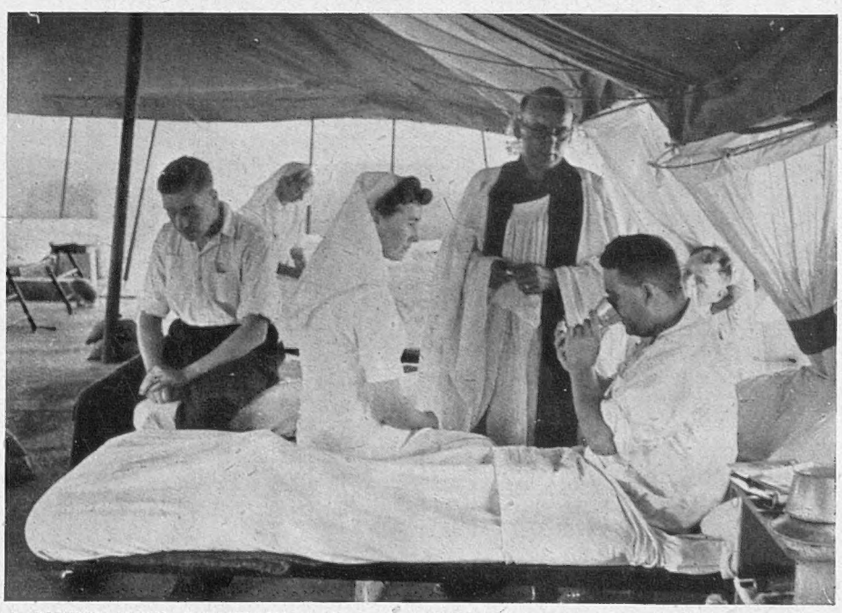
AN ARMY PADRE HOLDS COMMUNION in a Middle East hospital : With boots and puttees showing beneath his cassock, the padre is on his way to give Communion to nurses and patients at the tent hospital



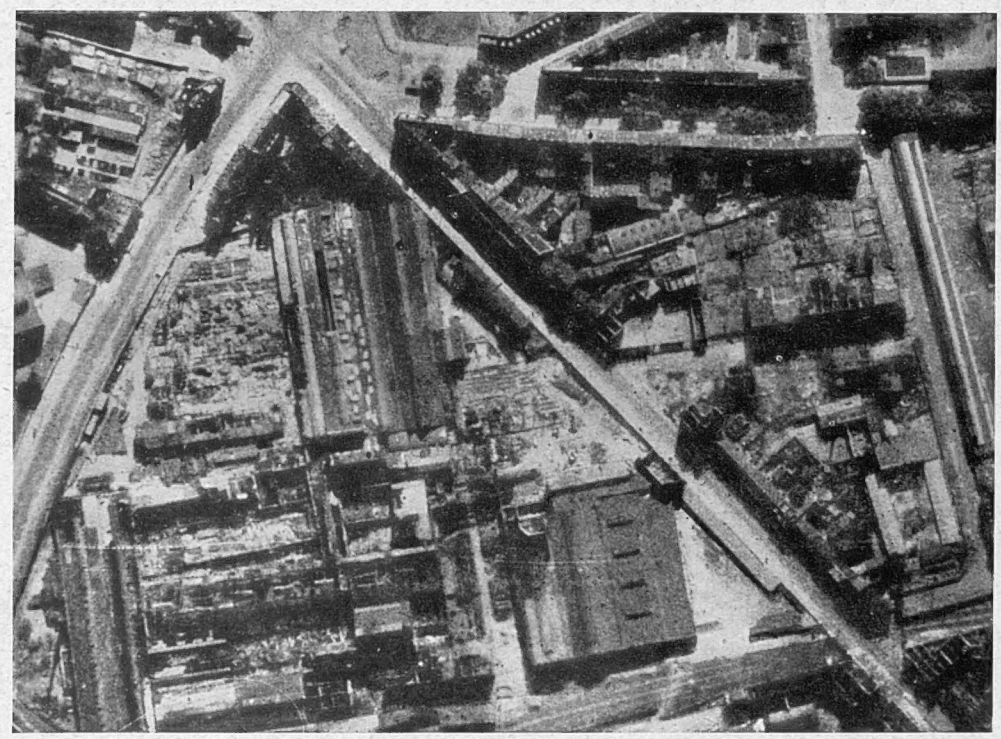
A STRETCHER CASE IS GIVEN A DRINK in the dressing station after being brought in ; whilst another walking case is being helped along the passage behind



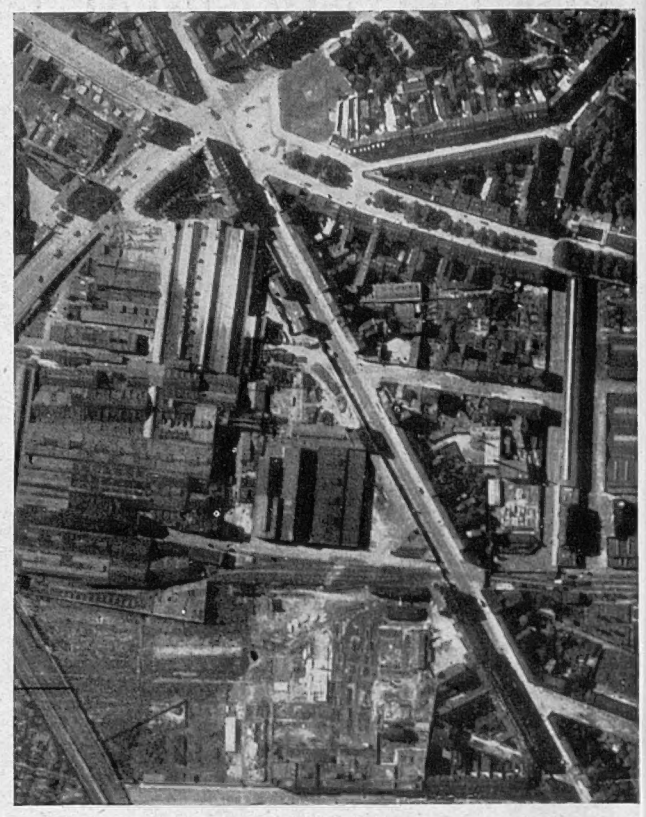
THE PADRE IS HERE HOLDING A COMMUNION SERVICE IN THE TENTED WARD : The men seen in the picture have all sustained wounds in the fighting at El Alamein



A PATIENT TAKES COMMUNION during the service, whilst a nursing sister watches over him. The "ward" is a tent in the Egyptian desert



DUSSELDORF: AFTER THE ATTACK ON SEPTEMBER 10-11 BY THE R.A.F.: The Deutsche Rohren Werke, one of several factories almost completely destroyed. This factory manufactures steel tubes. Many buildings are seen to be roofless and, in some cases, razed to the ground

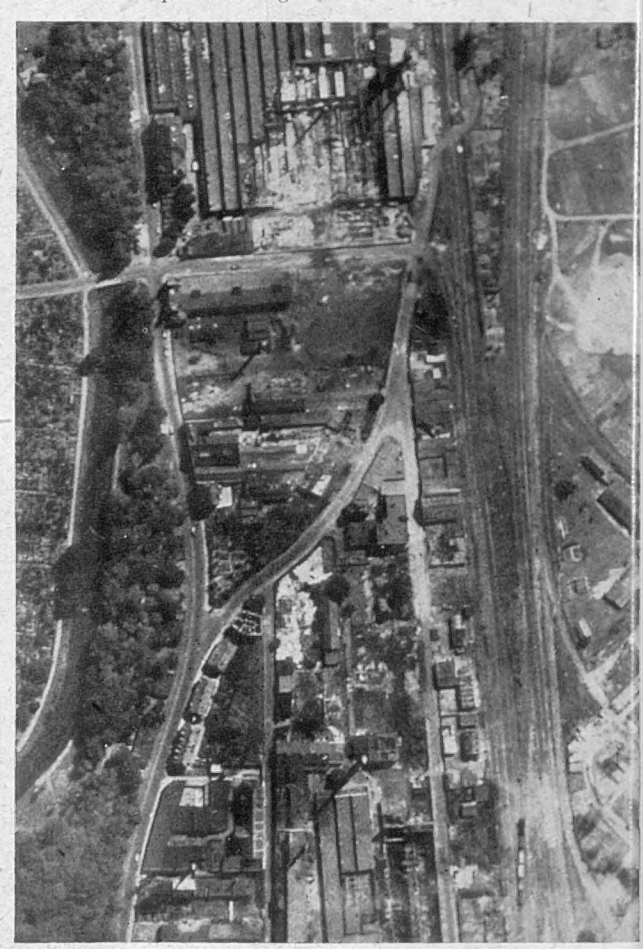


THE SAME WORKS BEFORE THE ATTACK: The whole apex of this triangle seems to have been wiped out by the bombs

The BOMBING of DUSSELDORF and KARLSRUHE

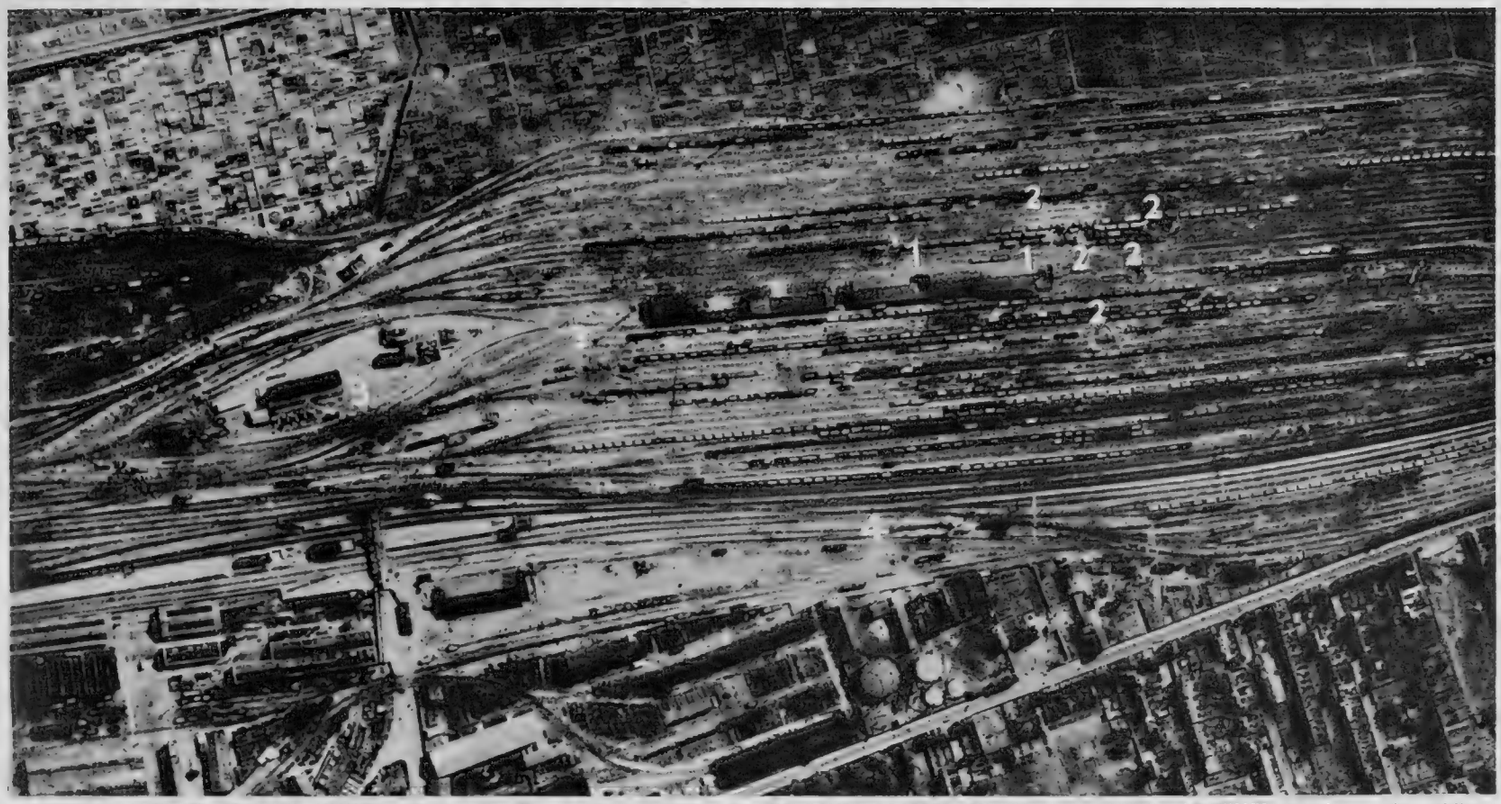
When R.A.F. reconnaissance aircraft flew over Dusseldorf in daylight on September 11—the day after Bomber Command's heavy night attack—most of the town was still obscured by smoke from the fires still burning, and a detailed assessment of the damage was not possible from the photographs the aircraft brought back. Sufficient was seen, however, to indicate that very heavy damage had been caused, and this was amply borne out by later reconnaissance photographs taken when the smoke had cleared. Two of these are reproduced on this page.

Karlsruhe was raided by the R.A.F. a week before the Dusseldorf attack—on September 2. Daylight reconnaissance has now yielded photographs indicating the effectiveness of the bombers' work with high explosive and incendiary bombs. Examination has shown that large areas have been swept by fire or demolished by bomb-blast. One of the official pictures is given below.

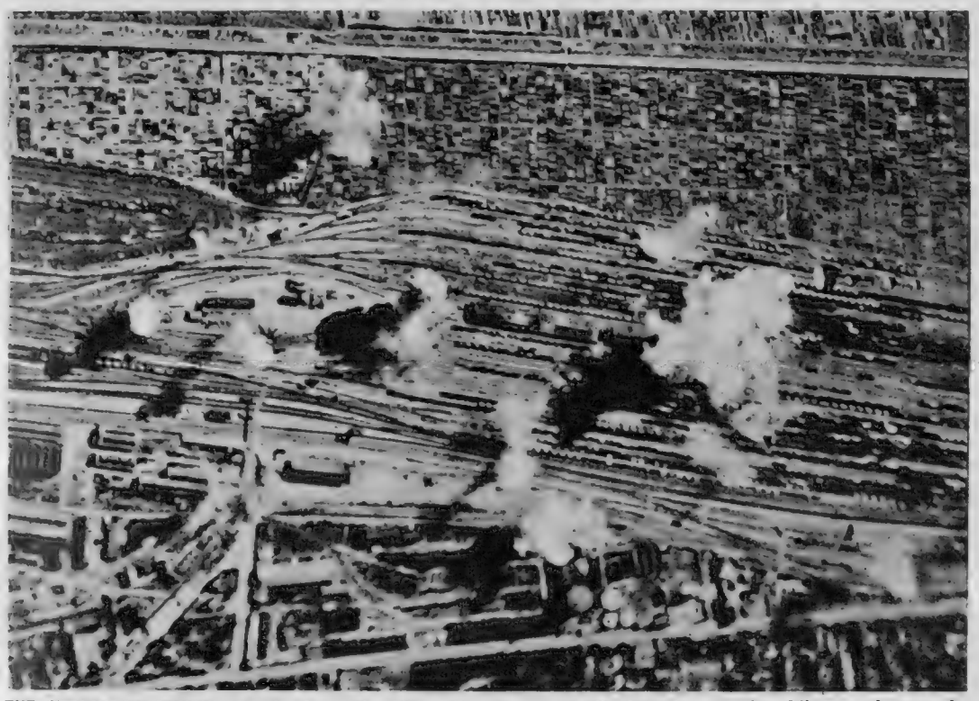


KARLSRUHE: A large factory area gutted by fire and swept by blast as a result of the September 2 raid. This picture shows the present state of the Junker and Ruh Werke, which used to make stoves and now makes field kitchens and other army equipment

On left—**DUSSELDORF: THE MAIN RAILWAY STATION severely damaged by an extremely heavy bomb. The hole in the roof is one hundred yards across. Blast damage can be seen across the main railway track and among sheds. A considerable area to the west of the Station can be seen, with the buildings almost completely gutted by fire. Few roofs are left**



A RECONNAISSANCE PHOTOGRAPH SHOWING SOME OF THE DAMAGE CAUSED BY THE BOMBS DROPPED BY THE U.S. FLYING FORTRESSES on the sorting-sidings at Rouen. These results were obtained after the attack, which is actually seen in progress in the picture below (*For detailed key see notes in text*)



THE ATTACK ON ROUEN: Bombs from the Flying Fortresses actually bursting on the sidings and near the Gas Works in bright daylight. The precision achieved by the bomb-aimers was, indeed, remarkable

FLYING FORTRESSES ATTACK ROUEN

The Results of the Bombing of the Marshalling-yards and Railway Viaduct

The series of Air Ministry photographs given on this page were all taken during, and after, the recent attack on the railway marshalling-yards at Rouen by Flying Fortresses of the U.S. Army Air Force. They tell their own story of the accuracy and effectiveness of the high-level raids in daylight in which these giant American bombers specialise.

The picture immediately on the left shows the attack on the yards in progress: above are the results of this attack, and the following is a key to the damage wrought.

1.—Two direct hits on the transhipment-shed.

2.—Five hits on the roads of the up and down sorting-sidings, causing considerable damage to tracks and rolling-stock.

3.—Two direct hits on the roads of the down sorting-sidings.

4.—Direct hits on the tracks near the Gas Works.

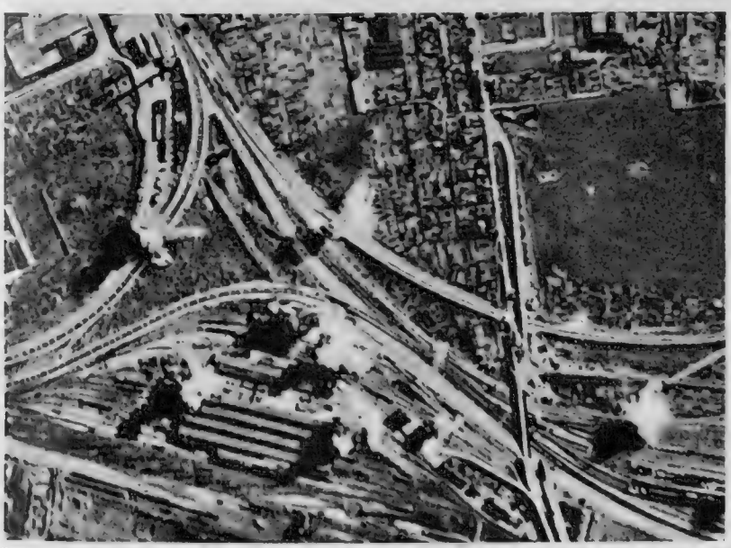
The two pictures at the bottom of this page show the attack on the Viaduc d'Eauplet. Here is the key to the figures in the right-hand picture.

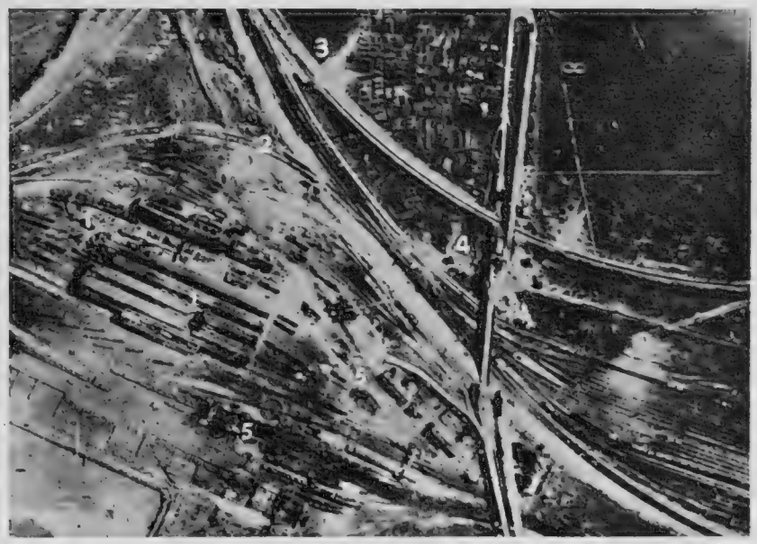
1.—Direct hit on engine-shed and workshop.

2.—Craters and damaged tracks east of the engine-shed.

3 and **4.**—Damage to the embankment carrying the lines to the Viaduc.

5.—Damage to the tracks south of the engine-shed.





On left—Bomb-bursts on the reception-sidings and railway lines leading to the Viaduc d'Eauplet. (*On right*)—What the reconnaissance photographs, taken later, revealed of the damage. The key to this picture is given in the text above

TANKS AND GUNS IN THE DESERT

THE TANK COMMANDER OF A U.S. CREW, a sergeant, uses his binoculars to inspect a distant point in the desert through his open turret. American crews are now working side by side with British Tank Regiments in Egypt. Note the manner in which the machine-gun is fixed on a swivel mounting in this picture; and also the open turret flaps

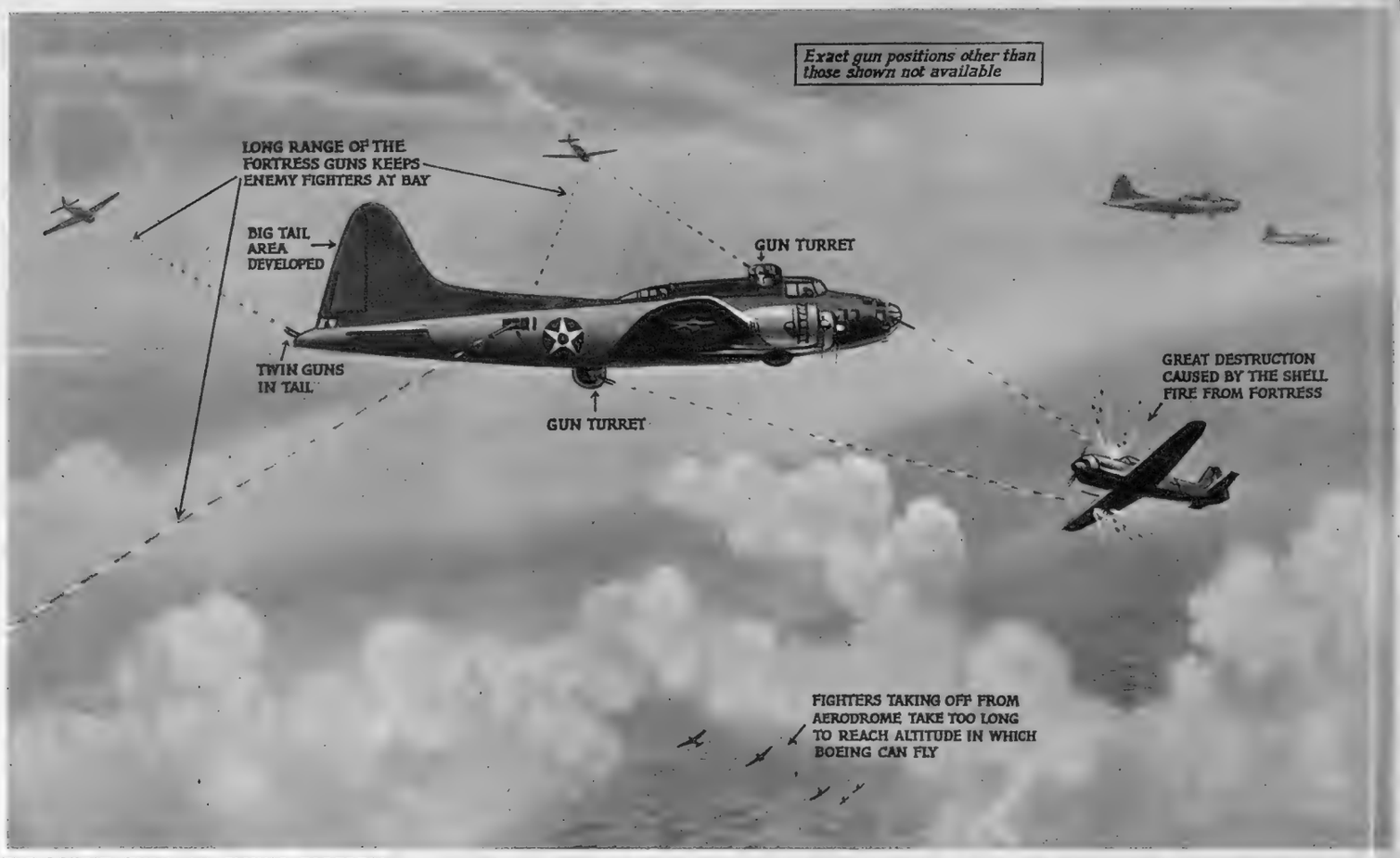
MR. R. G. CASEY, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MIDDLE EAST, has just paid a two-day visit to the Alamein battle-front. He visited a number of different units, and showed a great interest in captured enemy material, such as this German tank

A BRITISH SIX-POUNDER IN A DESERT ARTILLERY DUEL: The gun is answering shot for shot as enemy shells fall near during one of the long-distance bombardments which are such a feature of the war in Egypt. This is the gun which is now being produced in big quantities in Britain—largely by woman labour. The good protection for the gunners behind the shield and side wings is well brought out here. Note the size of the charges used to propel the six-pound shell on its way

A TYPICAL INCIDENT IN THE LIFE OF A TANK CREW ON PATROL THROUGH THE FLAT AND SANDY DESERT. Life for those engaged in this task is full of discomfort—but it is anything but tedious! When the crews bed down for the night they have the sands for a bed and army blankets for a pillow! In this picture note the spare petrol and water tins carried on the front of the leading vehicle

IS THIS DESTINED TO BE THE ANSWER TO THE HEAVY GERMAN TANK? The picture comes from California, where U.S. troops in training have been using the "tank killer" during rehearsals of desert warfare. The tank is used for mobility and the heavy-calibre gun with which it has been equipped for punishing the biggest enemy tanks and gun positions. The "tank killer" could be used by any army with good effect against heavier vehicles and guns

ATTACK BY THE R.A.F.: And the Types of Aircraft which are Being Employed—*Special Sphere drawings*



THE LATEST TYPE OF FLYING FORTRESS, WITH WHICH THE U.S. AIR FORCES HAVE BEEN SCORING NOTABLE SUCCESSES in high-level, daytime bombing against the Germans. What the new type looks like, how it is armed and how its successes have been achieved—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

When the first of the Flying Fortresses came over from the United States for operation by the R.A.F., they did not distinguish themselves in daytime operations with anything like the success which the U.S. Air Forces have been achieving of late. This was due to three main things: (1) the latest type differs radically from its predecessor; (2) it is much better armed defensively; (3) the crews are specially picked and trained for high-altitude flying. The Boeing B-17E, as it is known to the Americans (by the R.A.F. it is designated Fortress II), is quite different from the Flying Fortresses which participated in the bombing of Occupied France from high levels some months ago: details of its equipment and armament, weights and performance, are still secret; but it is known that twelve machine-guns are fitted, firing ·5 ammunition, which has a longer range and greater hitting power than the ·303 ammunition of our own machine-guns. The Fortress, when engaged in daylight operations, flies at a very great height: this, coupled with its speed, makes it less vulnerable to attack by the enemy's fighters. The pilots and air crews, specially selected, are big husky fellows with exceptional lungs: they are trained to withstand the rarefication of the air at the heights at which the Fortresses fly. On occasion, when enemy fighters have been able to make contact with these huge aircraft, the former have invariably come off worse, and have suffered considerable loss sometimes, owing to the heavy fire-power of the Fortresses' twelve guns. It should be noted that, in the above drawing, the exact gun positions—other than those shown—are not at present available for publication

IN THE MIDDLE EAST, THE NEW U.S. MITCHELLS, AND OTHER AMERICAN AIRCRAFT, ARE FLYING WITH THE R.A.F. in comradely co-operation, and they are now pulling their full weight for the first time in actual operational work in the desert—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

The B.25 American-built bomber is the aircraft with which General Doolittle bombed Tokyo. In the Middle East, this aircraft is called the Mitchell by the R.A.F. Working with other U.S.-built types—the Baltimore and Boston bombers, and the Kittihawk fighters—these aircraft are now pulling their full weight, co-operating with the R.A.F. in the raids on Tobruk and other important enemy supply bases in the Middle East. American pilots and crews fly the Mitchells, and American staffs maintain them on the ground. The Baltimores and Bostons, which fly with the Mitchells, are usually operated by South Africans and the R.A.F. All these bombers have as escorts the Kittihawk fighter, operated by U.S. fighter squadrons. The Boston is also known, when used by the R.A.F., as the Havoc; whilst to the U.S. air forces the Kittihawk is known as the P.40. The principal distinguishing features of all four types are indicated above

WHIRLWIND FIGHTERS, USED FOR THE FIRST TIME AS BOMBERS, attack enemy armed trawlers and sink two of them. The Whirlwinds come in low to the attack, whilst high above is an escort of Spitfires—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

The Whirlwind is made by the same company that produces the highly-successful Lysander. It is one of Britain's most recent fighters: it is powered with two 885-h.p. Rolls-Royce motors, and its armament consists of four 20-mm. cannon-guns in the nose, which give a weight of fire of 600 lb. per minute. It has just been made public that some of these fighters have been modified to carry two bombs (outboard of the engines), in much the same way in which the Hurricane was modified many months ago. On their first sortie, the Whirlwind bombers attacked four enemy trawlers off Cap de la Hague, first with cannon and then with their bombs. The Whirlwinds were protected by an escort of Spitfires, as the operation took place in full daylight. Only two of the four ships were left afloat after the attack. This single-seat aircraft has been credited with a speed of 400 m.p.h.: it was first used as a fighter in August 1941

A BEAUFORT TORPEDO-BOMBER ATTACKS AN AXIS TANKER IN THE IONIAN SEA: The large enemy vessel was carrying supplies to Rommel when she was sighted by the Beauforts. Torpedoes were dropped, and soon a stream of oil about a mile long was seen issuing from both sides of the tanker, suggesting that she had been hit low down in the hull

A NEW PHASE IN BOMBING TACTICS: A lone R.A.F. Wellington attacks a German industrial plant in daylight (see notes at left)—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

On right—Recent statements concerning our bombing offensive over Germany go to indicate that the R.A.F. are now making use of lone raiders to attack specific targets *in daylight*. (This, of course, in addition to our very heavy night raids by concentrated and powerful forces, the weight of which is growing each week.) The lone raider runs a risk of interception by the enemy's fighters, of course: but he also stands a good chance of doing quite a lot of damage on, say, a big industrial plant such as that indicated here—especially if cloud conditions are good. The well-tried, sturdy Wellington would be an ideal aircraft for such ventures

Two Middle East Problems

I The MYSTERY of "INTELLIGENCE"

How Much Do We Know of the Enemy's Strength?

MANY people must have been puzzled by a recent statement of Admiral Sir Henry Harwood, victor of the River Plate and new Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet. He might have been misreported, but was quoted as saying "*we have no means of knowing how far Rommel has been reinforced by air or sea.*" What does this mean? Surely it does not indicate that our once-famous Intelligence services are no longer capable of carrying out their duties.

Of course not. The three Intelligence departments of the armed forces, and those of civil divisions such as the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Economic Warfare, possibly work under greater Middle Eastern handicaps to-day than ever before. The enemy's dislocating advance to El Alamein, overwhelming our "observation posts" from Tobruk onwards, and his careful sealing of European listening-holes, have restricted the enterprise of our agents. But there is no doubt that Headquarters in Cairo and London alike get pretty nearly all the information they want.

Admiral Harwood was dealing with the narrow aspect of the precise number of ships and planes making the Mediterranean passage, and coincidentally enlarging his reputation for enigmatic statement and leaving the enemy guessing. As a side issue, he was probably covering himself in advance against recriminations if Rommel used his reinforcements to smash a final way to Alexandria.

Departures from Europe are checked by spies, of whom there is unlikely to be a great lack in the Balkans, through which the greater proportion of Rommel's renewed strength has appeared to come, embarking by air and sea mainly from the Greek ports of Salonika, Nauplia and Gythium, some of them proceeding via Crete. Indeed, the work of special agents has been rendered almost superfluous of late by the ordinary activities of Turkish journalists!

We have probably faced greater difficulties in checking desert arrivals, owing to our loss of forward bases—and because the desert is, well, the desert. If there were populous Oriental towns between El Alamein and Tripoli, we should be able to use the romantic "bazaar technique" that has served us and our novelists so well.

Then the ease of camouflaging vehicles and troops in the desert, and dust-storms, tend to defeat precise aerial observation; while Rommel has taken special care to keep us guessing. A correspondent wrote recently: "Only a few thousand yards away, Rommel is trying his utmost to deny the 8th Army any observation of his movements. Yesterday, as on the past two or three days, his fighters have kept up constant patrols with this end in view."

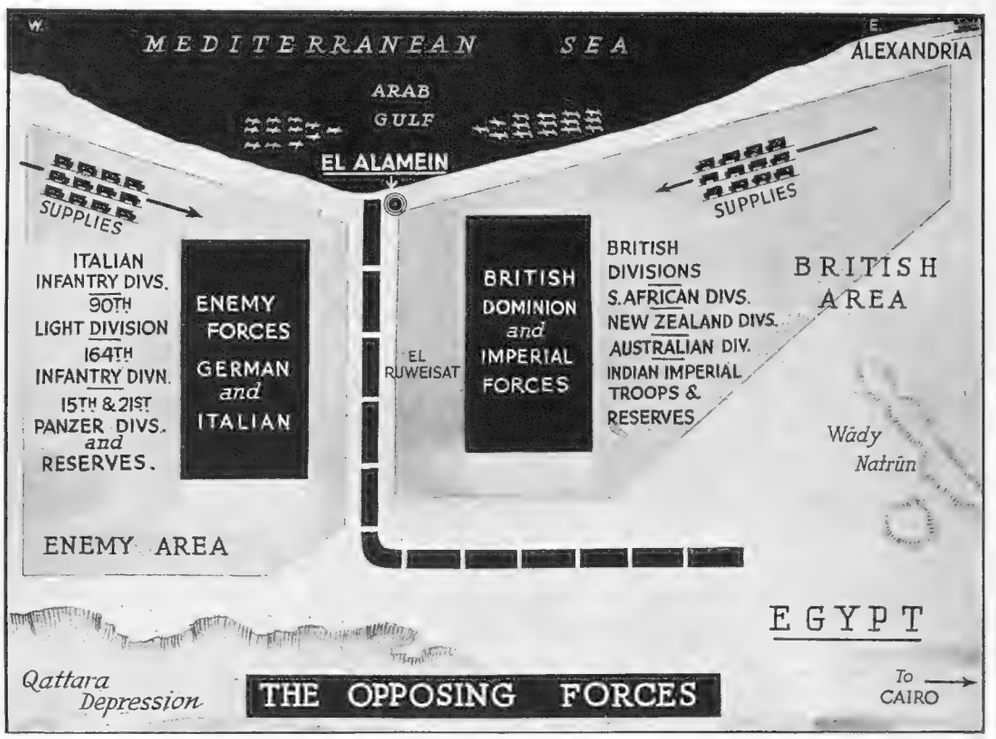
But once again you cannot hide your strength and intentions indefinitely, even in the desert. It has been general knowledge, and has even been mentioned in numerous Press reports that have passed the Cairo Censor, that Rommel has succeeded in getting across at least an entire new German division—the 164th from Crete—plus a new Italian division (the Pistoia), in addition to building up the reduced 90th (Light) Division. The correspondents have also spoken of evidence that one German and one Italian parachute regiment have been brought over, while common knowledge of panzer reinforcements has included exact details of new and formidable Mark IV tanks, mounting the 75-mm. gun as an anti-tank weapon, with a barrel about 9 ft. long.

Indeed, many observers have reported that the Afrika Korps, thanks to these additions, has been restored to its full strength as existing before the present campaign. Now, General Auchinleck, on his retirement, claimed the 8th Army had taken 10,000 prisoners alone from Rommel, so there is a basis already for computing how many men the Axis forces must have received since.

Then there is the continual process of deduction by the percentage method from certain facts. As each lighter carries the equivalent of 90 three-ton lorries, aerial observation of the number of such vessels that get through to Axis ports in Libya can establish the extent of supply reinforcement by barge transport. The R.A.F. is able, after a time, to discover the approximate percentage of transport aircraft it shoots down.

Intelligence has often been blamed in this war, but the history of wars usually reveals afterwards that Intelligence has been blamed unjustly. In other words, Intelligence reports are useless in themselves. It is the way the Command acts on them that counts.

D. C.



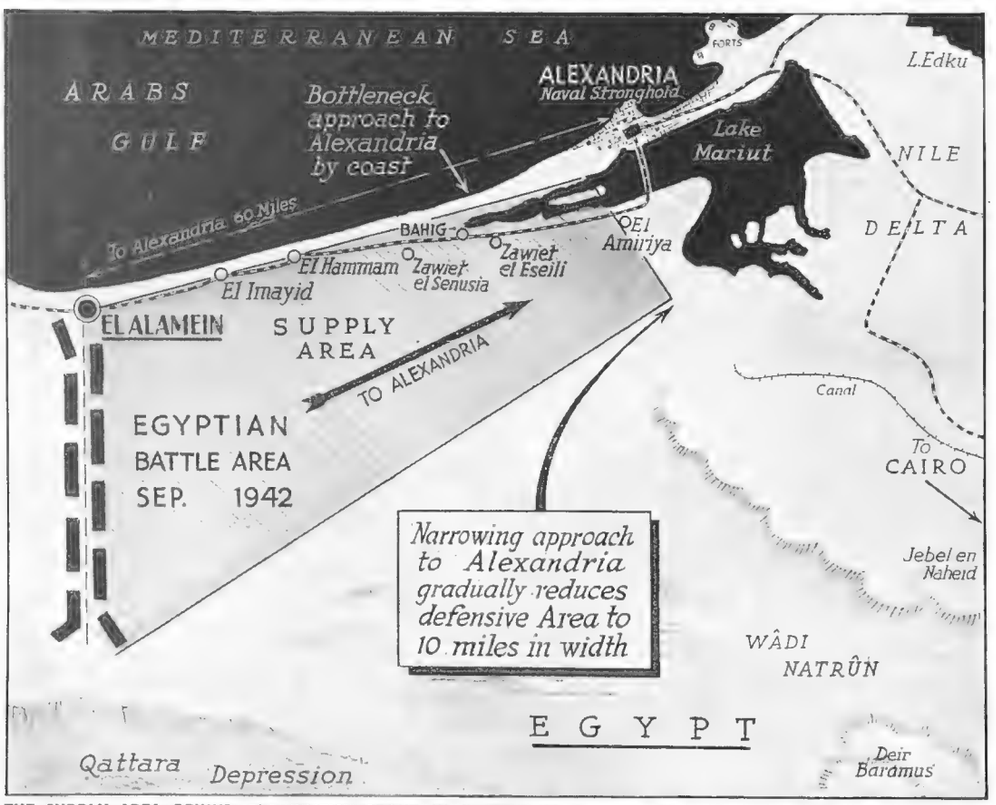
THE OPPOSING FORCES IN EGYPT: This diagram shows what is definitely known of the existing dispositions of German, Italian and British divisions in the Egyptian Desert

II The PROBLEM of CAPTURED STORES

Defeating the Enemy's Technique of Living on Loot

"GENERAL ROMMEL'S surprisingly rapid advance was only rendered possible because he used our captured stores and vehicles," stated the Prime Minister in his recent review of the Libyan situation (with reference to the unpleasant events of last June and July). Still more concrete revelations of what happened have been given by correspondents who visited the battlefield after we repulsed Rommel's attack round the Qattara Depression the other day, and who sent us those stories of British rations, clothing, stationery, and even razor blades as found in German tanks. It is a galling business, but one would not feel unduly worried about it if it had not happened so often before.

The Germans have been playing the same game successfully against us since the beginning of the war. The disquieting aspect of the matter, therefore, is that after our experiences then (and subsequently in the Far East) we did, in fact, allow Rommel to repeat his barefaced impudence. Possibly our desert leaders and even their London superiors and counsellors have been too busy and worried to effect revolutionary changes in what is known as "Q" organisation as it applies to these unique Libyan conditions. But it should be obvious by now that, out there, an entire army can be rolled up overnight, and that to pile vast quantities of stores and equipment behind an army is a positive incentive to the boldest kind of enemy action, as well as the shortest way to complete defeat. An unhappy chance might suddenly give Rommel a renewed opportunity and he might encircle General Montgomery. What immediate prizes of sustaining new stores and equipment would he obtain then?



THE SUPPLY AREA BEHIND THE BRITISH FRONT IN EGYPT: This narrows down to a small gap which is only about ten miles wide outside Alexandria. (See article herewith)

On the one hand, we have the fact that a modern army must be followed by, or have access to, a tremendous quantity and variety of material, unprecedented in any war of the past. On the other hand, we have the fact that the very nature of the new warfare makes it easy for an entire army's stores and equipment to be captured in one swift encircling movement. How are the two opposing facts to be reconciled and our future substance saved? (Remember that the activities of the Quartermaster-General's Department now involve an expenditure of about £3,000,000 a day, a quarter of all we are spending on the war.)

The problem could, perhaps, be attacked from its separate sides. That is, attention could be paid to the position and method of handling of the stores themselves. A rule could be laid down that only the absolute minimum of material be kept in areas likely to be taken by the enemy, and that the bulk be kept at a great distance away, no matter the difficulties of swift transport to the line. Rommel himself has been operating in this way since the beginning. He has improvised all along, making do with a trickle of supplies from Italy and Greece by occasional ship and air. We have possibly given him more ourselves than he has ever obtained direct from Europe.

But if it becomes manifestly impossible to conduct large-scale operations on "iron rations" for guns and tanks, then we might consider the further mechanisation of the various "Q" units, so that, literally, not a case of shells, tin of petrol or even packet of razor blades would touch the ground till immediately needed: being carried on vehicles or in aircraft always, and thus being capable of making a "quick getaway" in time of trouble. We have mastered the technique of saving our guns in that way.

Then attention could be paid to the other side of the problem, namely, that of demolition as practised by the Royal Engineers and all units in emergency. The methods employed by the 8th Army could not have been satisfactory, or Rommel would hardly have obtained so much. It is a matter here of devising explosives and fuses, capable of being touched off in a moment by yourself, but not susceptible to the shells and bombs of the enemy.

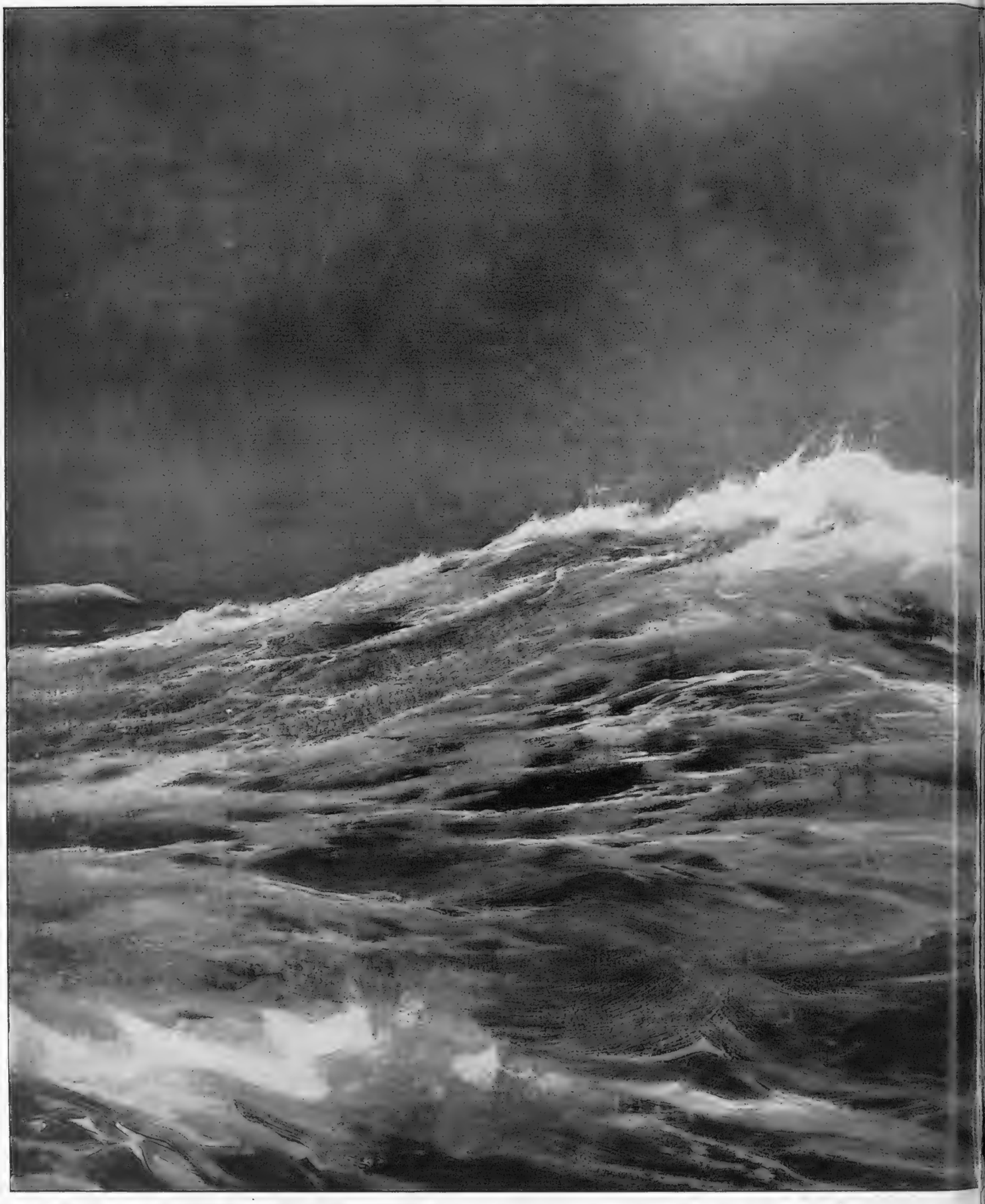
D. C.

On the GEORGE CROSS ISLAND

Although Malta's Churches are Battered by Bombs, Her People Remain "Undaunted and Undismayed"; the Religious Life, in Particular, Still Goes on, as for Centuries Past

—Drawing by Edward Osmond

When Lord Gort presented the George Cross to the Island of Malta last week, he referred to the battering of the Island's homes and historic buildings by the most concentrated air attacks the world had ever seen: he also referred to the quality of moral courage which sustained the Island, so that it remained "undaunted and undismayed." The Maltese are an intensely religious people: they fought for Christendom three hundred years ago, and before that their island had been a base for warfare against the Infidel. To-day, there can be no doubt that their courage is sustained by their deep religious feelings. Every Sunday, no matter what the raids, they dress in their Sabbath black and meet together wherever it is possible. Church after church has been destroyed by the pagan Nazis: and this has been a sore blow to their congregations, but the worshippers are undeterred in their devotions. Altars with lilies are still to be seen amidst the ruins; the children of Malta are as brave as their parents, and they, too, carry on. Miss Sybil Dobbie, daughter of the former Governor, has said that there is a Memorial erected to Maltese children who helped to bring up food and ammunition to the defenders in the first siege: if the Knights could return and see the children to-day, they would find the same spirit in the present-day Johns and Bettys, and Angelos and Gaetas!



HEAVY WEATHER AT SEA

—A special Sphere *drawing by Montague Dawson*

A British Escort Vessel Encounters an Exceptionally High Sea whilst on Patrol Duty in Mid-Atlantic

The vessel shown here is a sloop of 990 tons, a type which has many times proved its great worth during the present war

With a Note on the Sailors' Everlasting Foe—Weather!

By A. J. McWHINNIE

THOUSANDS of years before mines, torpedoes, bombs and shells were invented there were "those in peril on the sea." For weeks past, sailors on the bridge of warships and freighters have been stripped to the waist sunbathing. But the winter gales are on their way. Pullovers, mufflers, balaclavas and duffel coats are piled on as the sailor goes on watch.

Every day since the war started there have never been fewer than 2,000 British merchant ships and 600 British warships out on the oceans at any one time. That minimum of 2,600 British ships will be setting out to face their fourth winter of the fiercest sea war in history. There are days ahead when shrieking winds will lash the angry waves into a fury, as though a million giants on the sea-bed were demonstrating their maniacal power. The land-lubber, whose sea experience may have been confined to short holiday cruises, knows only two kinds of weather—"smooth" and "rough." The sailor grades his weather into dozen values—the twelve states of wind laid down by Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort, who lived between 1774 and 1857.

Here are the twelve grades in the Beaufort scale:

Nautical miles per hour	*Force*	*Description*
0—1	0	Calm.
2—6	1 and 2	Light airs.
7—10	3	Light breeze.
11—16	4	Moderate breeze.
17—21	5	
22—27	6	Strong wind.
28—33	7	
34—40	8	Gale.
41—47	9	
48—55	10	Storm.
56—65	11	
Above 65	12	Hurricane.

It will be seen, then, from the table compiled by Admiral Beaufort, what a terrific buffeting a ship can get when the wind roars at a ship at more than 50 miles an hour—force 10 or 11—whipping up the seas until they smash over the fo'c'sle at bridge height. The landsman-writer usually describes the big waves of storms and hurricanes as "mountainous," and, true, that is what they look like when you are in a small ship ploughing your way through force 10, 11 or 12 weather. But, in fact, the highest waves in the Atlantic are about 40 ft., more than seven times higher than the height of the average man.

In southern waters, high winds lash the waves to a height of about 60 ft., and there are cases where waves of something like 100 ft. have been encountered. But the sailor hates operating by guesswork. In the case of waves, too, he has a graduated scale for assessing the seas. It is the Douglas Sea and Swell Scale, which does help to avoid miscalculation.

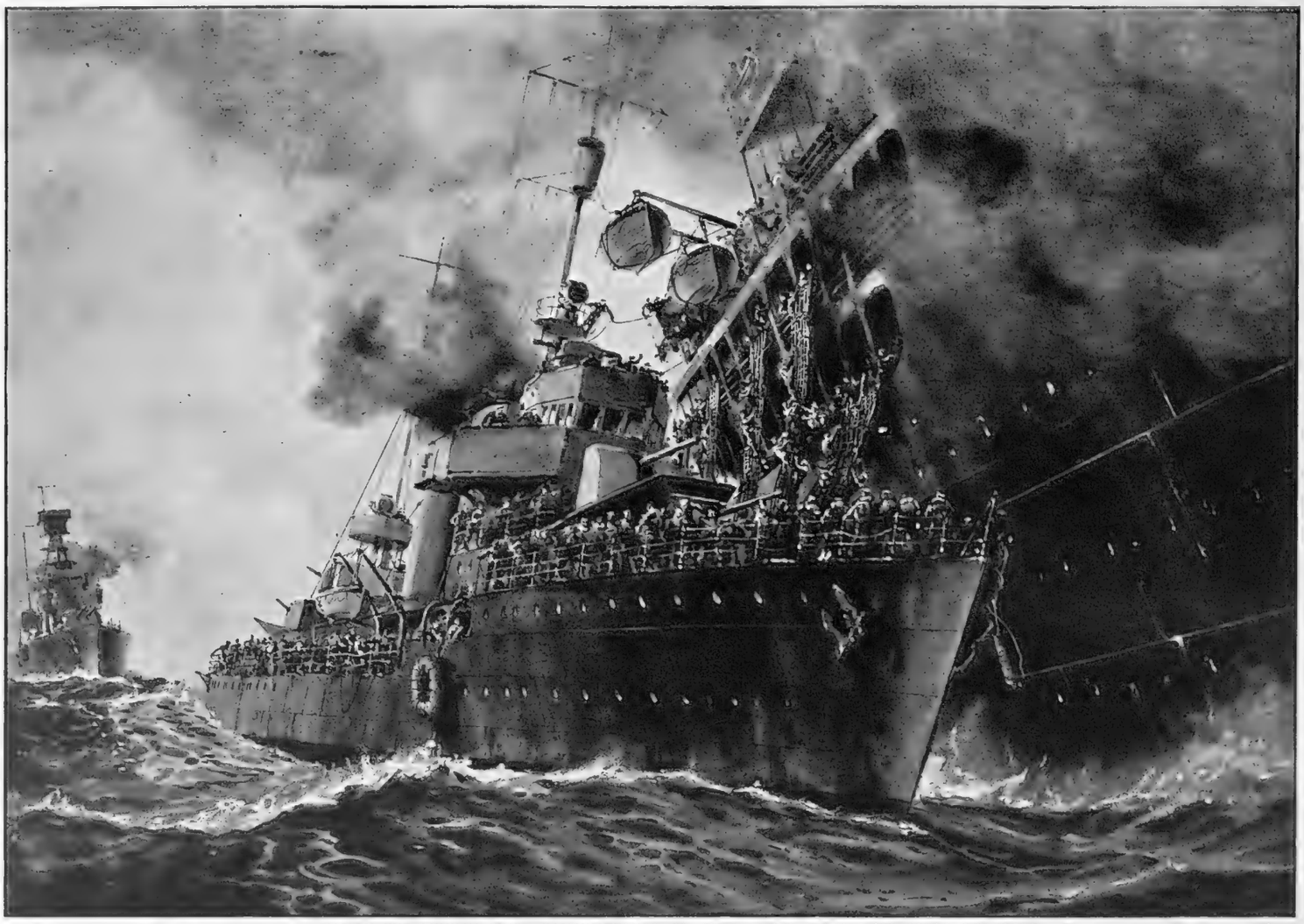
This is the scale generally used in the Service:

Notation	*Sea*	*Swell*	*Height of waves in feet*
0	Calm	No swell	0
1	Smooth	Low swell	1
2	Slight		1—2
3	Moderate	Moderate swell	2—3
4	Rough		3—5
5	Very rough		5—8
6	High		8—12
7	Very high	Heavy swell	12—20
8	Precipitous		20—40
9	Confused	Confused swell	40 and above.

When a 40-ft. wave smashes over a small ship the thunderous weight of the tons of water banged on to the deck and superstructure can bend steel plates as though they were tin. Bad weather in the winter gales can easily cause as much damage to a nation's warship and freighter fleets as the damage inflicted by an enemy. Those big waves in the Atlantic travel at more than 20 miles an hour, and the length of a single wave may well be something like 300 ft.

Apart from the Atlantic there are tropical storms—circular or revolving storms caused by deep depressions of the cyclonic system. Usually these storms travel at a very great speed, and the centre area is a mad inferno which the navigators of all ships fight for their very lives to avoid.

The tropical storms in the Indian Ocean are called cyclones; in the Pacific and the West Indies they are hurricanes, and in the China Seas, typhoons. The tornado applies particularly to off-shore squalls around the West African coast. There are British ships sailing through all these types of storms in this war. In total war there can be no laying-up at the quayside waiting for storms to abate before sailing. The convoys must sail, whatever storms, blizzards, fog or ice they encounter.



THE U.S. TRANSPORT "WAKEFIELD" (FORMERLY THE LUXURY LINER "MANHATTAN") ON FIRE AT SEA WITH 1,600 SOULS ON BOARD. The escorting destroyer edges in under the vessel, so that men from the burning ship can clamber down rope-nets to the deck. "To hell with the bridge! Hold her in!" yelled the destroyer's commander, as the waves flung his vessel against the liner's high side, smashing the warship's superstructure—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell*

HEROIC WORK AS A U.S. TRANSPORT BURNED AT SEA

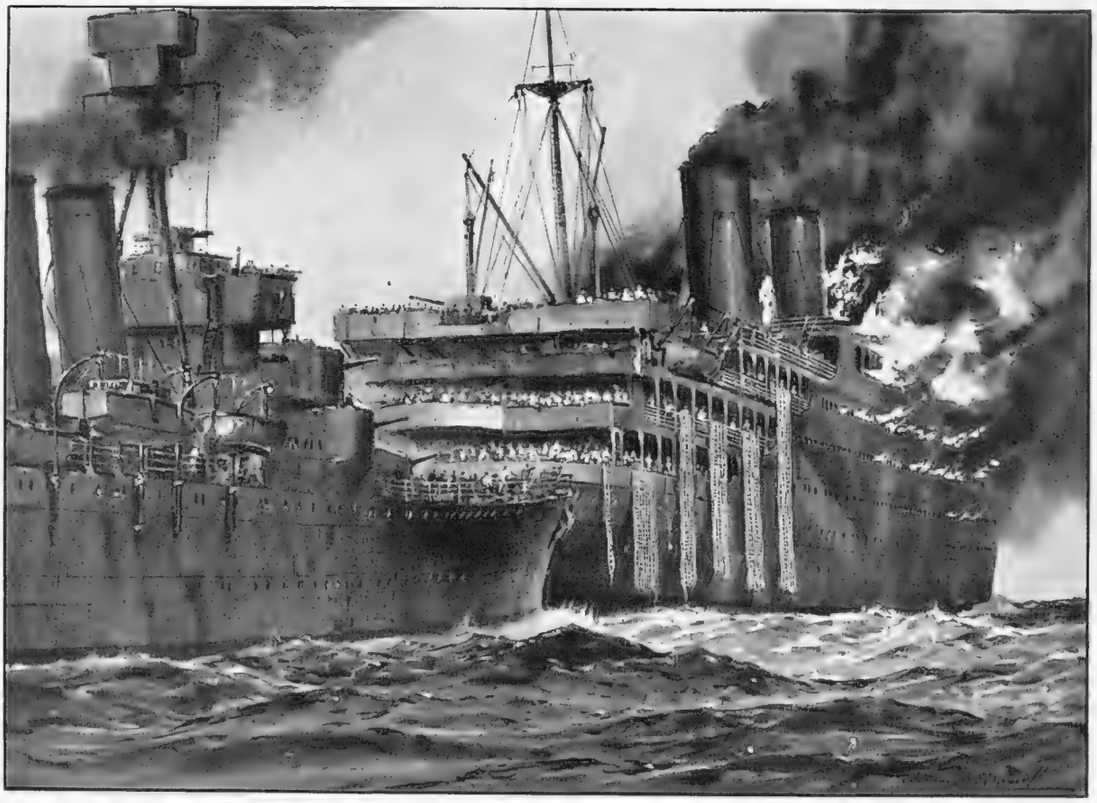
The Scene as the *Wakefield* Caught Fire Off the U.S. East Coast

IN pre-war days, the 24,000-ton liner *Manhattan* was the queen of the United States merchant fleet: to-day she is little more than a charred hull awaiting attention at an American East Coast port. She was built at Camden, in New Jersey, in 1932, at a cost of £2,500,000 sterling, and very soon she was known to thousands as a most popular and luxurious vessel on the cross-Atlantic run.

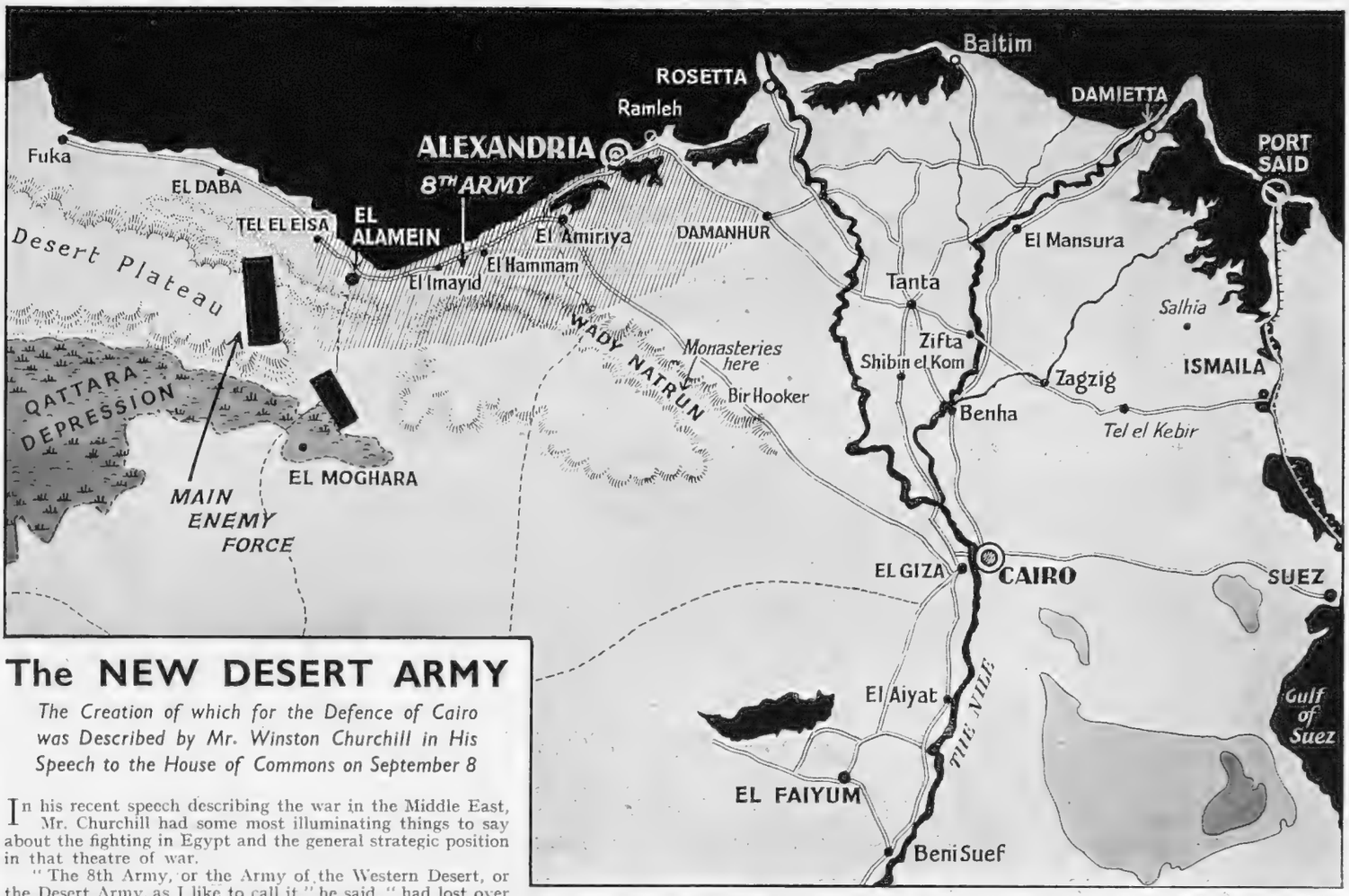
When the war came, like many another big liner, the *Manhattan* was converted into a transport. At the time of the fire she had 1,600 souls aboard—1,000 passengers (including American women and children from England and Eire, workers who had been engaged on building work in Britain and U.S. Army officials) and 600 members of the crew (all of them Coastguard men under Commander H. G. Bradbury).

The *Wakefield* was one of the vessels in an Atlantic convoy, when—on September 3—a fire of "undetermined origin" suddenly broke out on the deck level and rapidly spread through the ship. Two escorting vessels soon distinguished themselves in the work of rescue, a cruiser and a destroyer: the former placed herself against the stern of the transport and the destroyer along her side. Cargo-nets were draped over the *Wakefield's* side, and the passengers clambered down to the decks of the warships. Meanwhile, the ship's crew fought the flames, threw shells overboard and flooded the magazines to prevent an explosion. Efforts to get the fire under control at first were vain, and the crew also had to follow the passengers.

Later, however, the fire decreased. Commander Bradbury then led a special fire-fighting party back to the liner, and they eventually succeeded in bringing the flames under control. Tugs and salvage craft which had been summoned to the scene then took the 24,000-ton vessel in tow. According to accounts by members of the crew after their return to the United States East Coast, the fire was first noticed at about seven o'clock in the evening when wisps of smoke were seen on deck. "It doesn't seem possible that one fire could have spread so fast," said one man, "but I am sure there were no shells or torpedoes fired at us. Most of the men were on deck. They made no attempt to go below to get their belongings. We were headed into the wind, and the skipper quickly turned the transport round, so that the wind blew the smoke and flames away from us instead of from bow to stern."



THE BURNING OF THE TRANSPORT "WAKEFIELD": The men have been mustered aft, and rope-nets have been rigged ready for their escape over the side. Whilst the destroyer went alongside, as shown in the upper drawing, the cruiser manœuvred her bow within a few feet of the liner's stern. The crew of the latter then dropped down on to the cruiser's deck, to return later to bring the fire under control—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell*



"A NEW ARMY WAS BROUGHT INTO BEING ALONG THE NILE AND THE DELTA"—Mr. Churchill: Its exact position has not been given, but the Prime Minister has definitely indicated that it bars the way to the Nile

The NEW DESERT ARMY

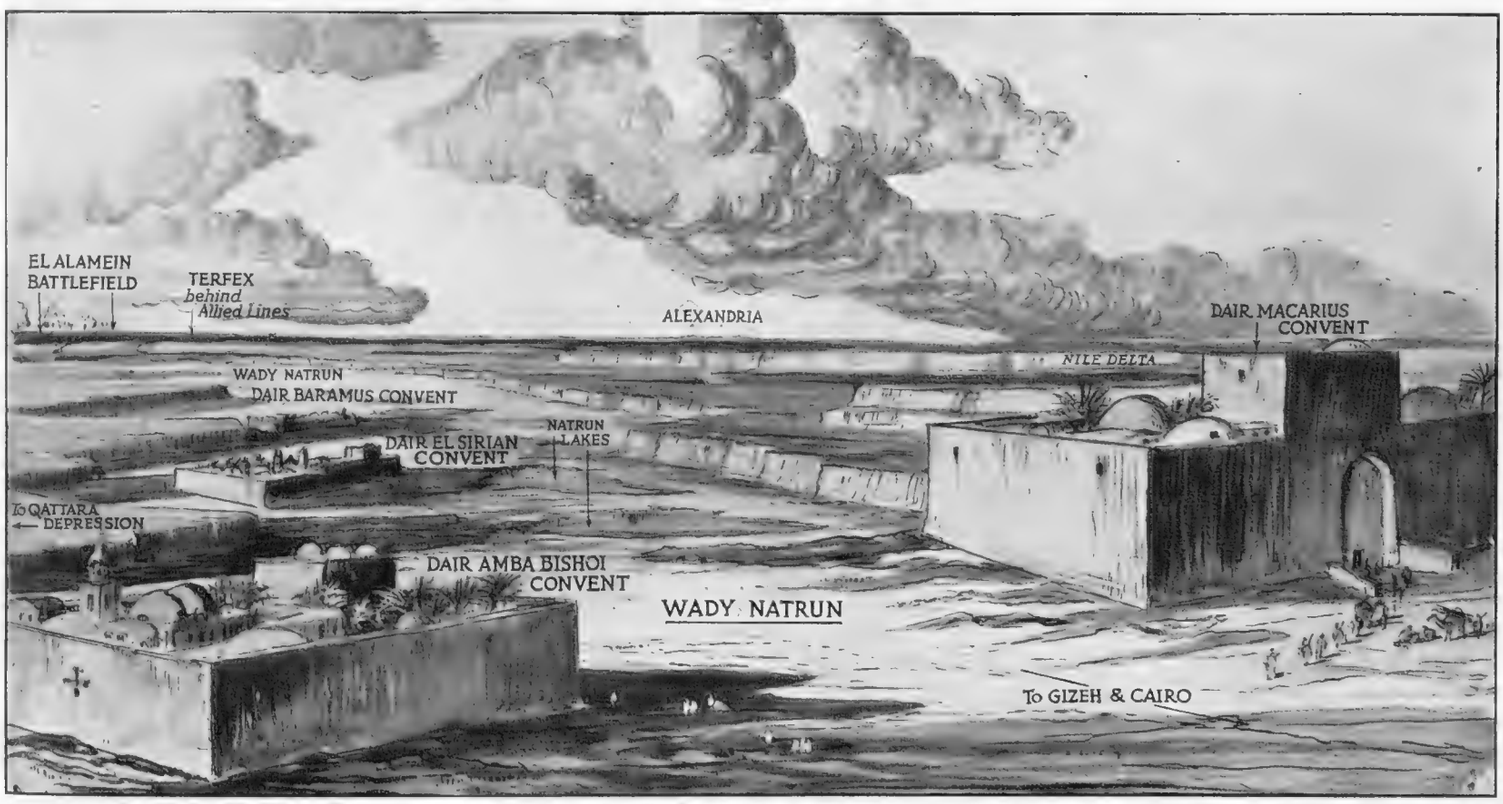
The Creation of which for the Defence of Cairo was Described by Mr. Winston Churchill in His Speech to the House of Commons on September 8

In his recent speech describing the war in the Middle East, Mr. Churchill had some most illuminating things to say about the fighting in Egypt and the general strategic position in that theatre of war.

"The 8th Army, or the Army of the Western Desert, or the Desert Army, as I like to call it," he said, "had lost over 50,000 men. It had been driven back about 400 miles since May, with immense losses in munitions, supplies and transport. . . . The divisional formations had been largely broken up and a number of battle groups or other improvised formations had sprung into being piecemeal in the course of hard fighting. . . . In spite of the heavy losses which I have mentioned, the Army of the Western Desert is now stronger actually and relatively than it has ever been. In fact, so large have the reinforcements which have reached this army been that what is to a large extent a new army has been created while the fighting has been actually in progress."

The Prime Minister then went on to say that "we have now in Egypt a very good, strong, well-equipped and resolute army barring the further advances of the invader"; and that Rommel could not run the risk of repeating the same tactics as he employed at Gazala. The question whether he would dare to push straight on to Cairo had, in fact, been discussed by our High Command: it was not considered likely that he would do so. Nevertheless, "in order that the Desert Army should have the fullest freedom of manœuvre, *a new Army was brought into being along the Nile and the Delta*, where conditions totally different prevail from those which exist in the desert."

With regard to the drawing of the Wady Natrun below: a long-established caravan route runs straight to Cairo by way of the Natrun lakes, the great monasteries and the pyramids of Gizeh. This is a natural trackway to the Nile. In the centre of the long gully are a number of marshy lakes which provide natron, a sulphate of soda, in vast quantities. In the vicinity of these lakes are four walled monasteries of the Coptic faith: they contain libraries of Coptic and Syrian MSS., and churches possessing rich ivory screens. The monasteries rise in strange seclusion amidst the escarpments of the lonely Wady Natrun.



A GATEWAY TO EGYPT? The Wady Natrun, famous for its nitrate deposits and for its group of Coptic monasteries, leads straight to Gizeh and Cairo from a point just behind the British lines at El Alamein. This is one of the approaches to the east which is presumably well guarded. The four walled monasteries in this picture are seen from the south-east, looking towards the battle area—*Drawing by Percy Horne*

KEEPING IN TOUCH IN THE DESERT: The portable radio sets which have made their appearance in great numbers during the present war can, if necessary, be operated by one man: but it is preferable that two should work the set. A length of ground aerial, about 20 ft. long, is employed. The range is short, but the apparatus is a useful addition under the conditions of modern in-fighting—*Drawing by E. Byatt*

WHEN THE WIRELESS CAR HAS BEEN PUT OUT OF ACTION: The mutual bombing of the lines of communication has often resulted in the beautifully-fitted radio van being knocked out either by blast or by shell splinters. Recourse must then be made to the motor-cycle despatch-rider, reminiscent of the campaign in France and Belgium of 1914-18. The radio van is here seen on the left, knocked into the ditch as the result of dive-bombing—*Drawing by E. Byatt*

A PORTABLE DESERT TELEPHONE EXCHANGE, with a maze of wires from the various battle positions leading to the inside of the truck

The Fighting in Egypt

CALLING H.Q.

The Problem of Maintaining Military Communications During Action

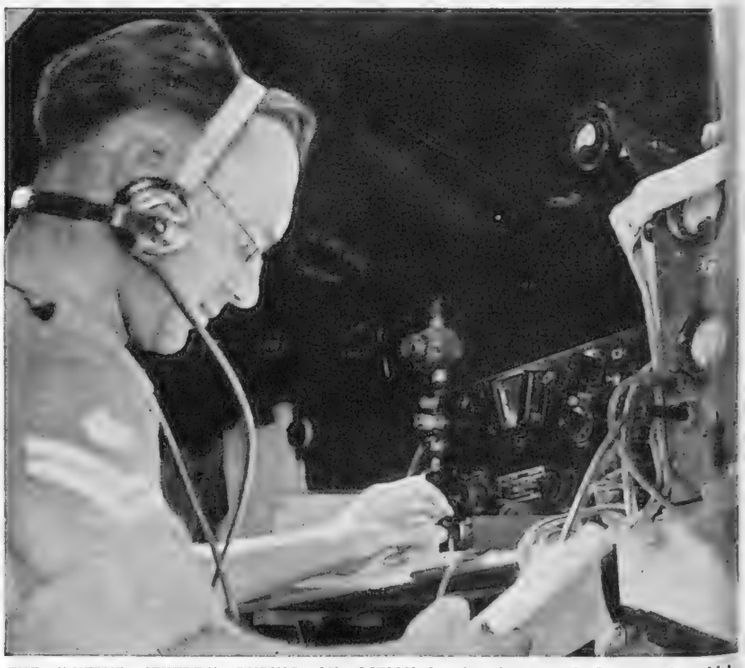
AS a subaltern in the last War, the writer once found himself designated a signals officer, and ordered to take a course in the supervision of a new brigade telephone system. It was a complicated device, and possibly rather beyond the comprehension of any but the technical mind. "It doesn't matter much," said the instructor calmly, "when we're in action we're usually too busy to attend to it, and the wires are usually broken anyhow." Such a philosophical attitude on the subject of maintaining communication is not so acceptable to-day. While modern methods of war have increased the fragility of communication systems, they have also increased the necessity of keeping them working come what may.

In the retreat from Tobruk, it was quite clear that our communications failed us more than once. Small bodies of our forces found themselves dive-bombed and strafed by tanks, and were obviously unable to summon help before being overrun. One understands that R.A.F. and Army radios work on such separate wave-bands that intercommunication is impossible. If this is in fact so, the prospect of delay is inevitable. The Army's message must first reach its own H.Q.—possibly Brigade Battle Headquarters—thence it must go to the R.A.F. H.Q., whence it will be relayed to the operational unit covering the zone from which the message originated—probably at least an hour ago. The possibilities of delay in such a many-linked chain are obvious. Fortunately, there are some signs that the sequence of operations has been drastically shortened lately.

Consider a supply column moving up in a danger area. It will have one or two radio-equipped vehicles among its escort. But an attack by dive-bomber or roving tank column may easily see all radio equipment smashed. What then? It becomes essential that the fate of the convoy should be made known and that assistance should be obtained for men and machines. An attempt must be made to locate a command post or observation post which is still in contact, by however devious a route, with H.Q. A runner will be despatched in search of such a point, obviously likely to be an inconspicuous dug-out in the neighbourhood of a battery, or some forward strong-box. From there, by land line or radio, and not necessarily in one stage, the message may eventually be got through.

In the settled zones to the rear, land lines are employed in preference to radio, for secrecy. Well to the rear, the lines are run underground, and a newcomer to the desert is invariably amused by the sight of a signalman squatting in a manhole of the identical London Post Office pattern, for all the world just like a linesman in High Holborn.

Desert communications present many special problems, due to the dust and heat. The 8th Army has for some time had its own special signals school in the Middle East. The infantrymen are trained to use the No. 18 radio pack-set. This is employed mainly between company and platoon, having a range of three miles only, but it is also available for calling up artillery support.



THE "NERVE CENTRE" DURING AN ACTION is the Armoured Command vehicle where staff officers and others, in touch by radio and telephone with every phase of activity, direct the operations. This picture shows a radio operator of the Second Armoured Brigade in the Egyptian Desert at work inside one of these highly-specialised vehicles

if batteries are within range. Dry batteries provide the power, and a 25-ft. ground aerial is used. At a pinch it can be carried and worked at the same time by one man (it weighs 30 lb.), but the crew usually consists of two. The set usually employed by trucks and lorries is the No. 11 transmitter-receiver, working from vehicle's accumulators. This has a range of up to 30 miles and so can usefully bridge a big gap in any system. But questions of secrecy make the land line or written message usually preferable.

The importance of communications by means of such portable radios is well evidenced by the recent successful raids on the French coast. In these raids groups are landed at various points and constant touch is maintained by radio, the directing commander thus being immediately acquainted with the progress of his operations and being able, when necessary, to rearrange his forces and alter his plans, the various company and platoon commanders receiving his orders almost direct. If, by misfortune, the radio equipment of any isolated section should be destroyed, recourse must be had to the time-honoured method of a runner carrying a verbal or written message.

This close liaison maintained by means of radio is well exemplified by items reported from the raid on Dieppe, when aircraft, to act as long-range artillery, were summoned to destroy enemy positions on one flank, and when aircraft, spotting the approach of enemy tanks, were able to inform the attackers, who despatched bombers to destroy them. Similarly, E-boats appearing from Boulogne were also spotted and dealt with. Any of these happenings, if not the subject of rapid communications, might have adversely affected the whole venture.

The great fault of radio, particularly radio-telephony, is short range and lack of secrecy. Power which will send a message 60 miles by wire will send it only 3 miles through the ether.

Dennis B. Ross

"COMMUNICATIONS" STICK IT OUT DURING THE ASSAULT ON TOBRUK—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*

One of the most dramatic incidents in the story of Communications in the Libyan fighting occurred when General Rommel was launching his concentrated attack on the south-east section of the Tobruk perimeter. Rommel followed the typical German method of break-through by concentrating every available dive-bomber on a narrow front. An advanced communication post lay in the path of the enemy's aircraft. The broken sentences of the signaller in charge, who remained at his post to the last, were received by General Ritchie's headquarters: they were probably the last recorded words to come out of Tobruk before it fell. "The Germans are coming," the signaller reported from his exposed and battered shelter. "It's getting too hot in Tobruk. . . ." And then there was silence

"DEMOLITION" WORK BY NIGHT IN THE DESERT: The special British squads which creep out at night to make sure that enemy tanks, put out of action during the day, are not patched up and used subsequently against us—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*

"It is one thing to knock a tank about, but it is quite another and often a much more formidable task to ensure that the enemy will never be able to use it again by destroying it subsequently with a charge of gelignite." That is a statement made recently by a war correspondent in the Egyptian desert. The work of demolition to which he refers has to be done by special squads every night after a tank battle. One of the men engaged on this work has described it in the following terms: "Four of us went out: it was the early part of the night and there was no moon. The enemy was constantly sending up Very lights and flares, and so we had to crawl and wriggle half a mile on our chests. We stopped dead every time the lights went up, hoping we had not been seen. Some 50 yards from the tank the rest of the party halted, and I went forward with a gelignite charge to put paid to the machine. The tank was apparently only temporarily knocked out, as the crew had remained inside, intending to move off in it some time during the night. I stole noiselessly up . . . it was then a ten-minute job before I could fix the charge. All the time only a plate of metal separated me from the Germans. . . . There was just one minute to get away before it exploded. As I rejoined the others, I saw the tank go up"

NEW PICTURES FROM THE RUSSIAN FRONT

THE SOVIET GUERILLAS CONTINUE TO HARASS THE GERMANS : A detachment on their way to execute an assignment. Quietly threading their way through the tall reeds and grasses, this brave little band is typical of many such on the Russian front. Their courage and ingenuity have aroused the admiration of the world

AMERICAN-MADE TRACTORS HELP THE SOVIET ARMY : Russian artillery moving through wooded country, using U.S.-built tractor-lorries to haul the guns. Tree-branches have been laid to form a corduroy roadway

HOW THE SOVIET REBUILDS HOMES for villagers in the liberated areas : Many areas around Moscow, Rzev and other towns have been liberated during recent months by the Red Army. The villagers' homes in such areas have often been wantonly demolished by the retreating German soldiers, and the peasants have been forced to occupy abandoned dug-outs while the Soviet Government have been building new homes for them. The upper picture shows a dug-out improvised as a home by Soviet collective farmers after their return : the lower one shows the new home built for them by the Government

SOVIET PARATROOPS CO-OPERATE WITH GUERILLAS IN THE ENEMY'S REAR : This group was dropped behind the lines to join up with guerillas. A number of operations were subsequently carried out, which resulted in the annihilation of a Nazi force

THE RESULT OF A STUKA ATTACK ON THE RUSSIAN FRONT : This picture from an enemy source shows a Soviet supply train after it had been attacked by dive-bombers. Train, track and station have all been obliterated—grim evidence of the destructiveness of the Stuka when it cannot be driven off by fighters

"GENERAL MUD" HAS ALREADY MADE A REAPPEARANCE ON THE RZEV FRONT, although along the Stalingrad sector the weather still remains intensely hot. Around Rzev and further north, autumn comes very soon after the harvest—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*

This general scene, just behind the fighting line on the Rzev front—second most active in Russia during recent weeks, owing to the attacks by the Red Army to relieve the pressure at Stalingrad—was described recently by a correspondent. The country in this region is slightly undulating, but is dull and poor. Most of the villages are little more than hamlets, which even in peacetime grew only just enough food for their own needs. Many families have already returned to areas which only recently were occupied by the Germans: women and girls are to be seen hurrying along the high road lugging their few chattels—pots and pans, and battered chairs and tables, and rough straw pailiasses. There is comparatively little military transport, except for a few ambulances, and trucks bringing back salvaged fuselages and wings of Russian planes along the highway. As soon as one turns off the metalled roads, "General Mud" is encountered: he usually takes the field in this region shortly after the harvest. In places, new roads are being constructed, use being made of broken bricks from shattered houses: the Russian Sappers have also made use of duckboards put down on a log foundation. Once off these roads, however, and transport is already beginning to become bogged

THE WAR BEHIND THE ENEMY LINES IN RUSSIA: Collective farmers and farm-women help the guerillas to harry the German army of occupation

One of the most amazing features of the war in Russia has been the courage and determination of all never to surrender to the German invader. Detachments of Red Army men, cut off from the main Soviet forces, have continued to carry on the struggle even when many miles behind the fighting front. The peasants have aided them in their courageous struggle, and food and ammunition have been dropped by parachute from aircraft of the Red Air Force. On occasions, parachutists too have been dropped to help in specialised operations. There can be little doubt that the disorganisation of the German lines of supply, and the harassing and delaying actions carried out by the Russian guerillas, have sadly hindered the enemy's plan of campaign

PICTURES from MEXICO, PORTUGAL and VICHY

MEXICO RENAMES A TOWN IN HONOUR OF LIDICE, in Czechoslovakia, "wiped off the map" by order of Hitler: The small town of San Jeronimo, near Mexico City, has changed its name to Lidice, to perpetuate the name of the town "wiped out" by Hitler in revenge for the death of Heydrich. The Mexican Minister of the Interior, Miguel Aleman (in centre, in dark suit), was present at the ceremony. On his left above is Señor Javier Rojo Gomez, Mayor of the new Lidice. The Vice-President of the United States, Mr. Wallace, sent a message in which he said: "San Jeronimo is raising the flag of human freedom by changing her name to Lidice"

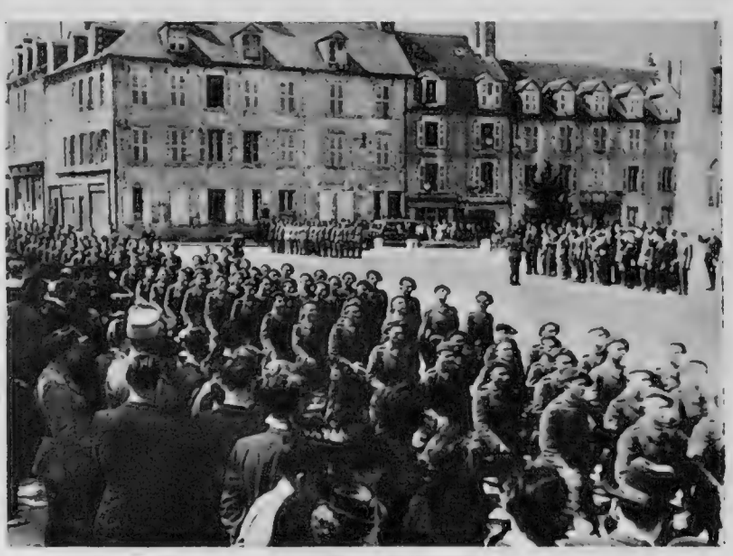
THE FAMOUS MEXICAN BAND OF LERDO TEJEDA plays the Mexican National Anthem at the Lidice renaming ceremony

SIXTY MERCHANTMEN SURVIVORS LAND AT FUNCHAL after the torpedoing of their ship off the west coast of Madeira: Of the sixty survivors, forty were Lascars. They were picked up by the small Portuguese warship *Pedro Nunes*, which caught up the S.O.S. calls sent out by one of the ship's boats. Many of the men landed in pyjamas lent by the crew of the warship. A third boat-load was picked up on the following day by the same vessel. This picture was taken as the survivors landed at Funchal

SPANISH FISHERMEN LOSE THEIR COSTLY FISHING-NETS in order to save ninety-six British seamen off the coast of Portugal: Two British freighters were recently torpedoed by a U-boat whilst on their way to Gibraltar. Within ninety minutes of the sinking all ninety-six survivors had been rescued and taken aboard two Spanish fishing-trawlers which cut their nets to rush to the spot. In the centre above is Captain Francisco-Perez Passos (on right), embracing one of the seamen after the survivors had landed at Lisbon

PÉTAIN'S ARMY—The Marshal reviews his "Personal Guard"

Standing on the steps of the Château de Charmeil, near Vichy, the aged Marshal reviews his elaborately-garbed guard, after they had been presented with the flag carried in the foreground. This newly-formed body—whilst outwardly professing to be merely a "guard" for the Marshal—has already shown markedly Fascist tendencies



LAVAL'S ARMY—The "Legion Tricolore" parades in Vichy

The Vichy Prime Minister has also formed his own special troops and modelled them (of course) on the Nazi S.S. The "Legion Tricolore," as they have been named, may "volunteer" for fighting on the Russian front soon. At the head of the Legion are General Galy and Colonel Puaud

A NAVAL "BLIMP" CRASHES IN THE U.S.

A U.S. NAVY PATROL "BLIMP" COLLAPSES IN MID-AIR over Daly City in California: A picture taken as the airship came down in a city street

The big Navy "Blimp" seen in the three pictures given here was first observed drifting lazily in from the sea over Daly City in California, with its back broken. As it came down it hit a house and two motor-cars, and was finally brought to rest after collision with a telephone-pole. It was then found that one depth-charge was missing—and also the crew of two. The U.S. Navy declared that there were probably several explanations for the mystery, but denied that the craft had been engaged in a fight over the Pacific Ocean, as some observers seemed to think. After hitting the roadway the "Blimp" slowly deflated in the manner shown on the right. These big craft are used by the U.S. Navy for various patrol and reconnaissance flights along both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts

THE GONDOLA OF THE "BLIMP" AFTER ITS CRASH: A sister-ship cruises overhead in search of the two members of the crew who were found to be missing after the airship hit a telephone-pole

HOW THE BIG NAVY "BLIMP" LANDED IN DALY CITY after striking one house and two motor-cars. After it hit the pavement the "Blimp" slowly deflated

U.S. TROOPS PLUNGE THROUGH FIRE AND WATER during their "toughening-up" exercises in Louisiana: This impressive picture comes from Harding Field at Baton Rouge, in Louisiana. It shows an American soldier on the point of leaping from a 20-ft. platform into a flaming tank below. The idea is to school the men in methods whereby they can avoid death or serious burns should their troopship be torpedoed and the passengers forced to jump into a flaming, oil-covered sea

AMERICAN PARATROOPS ADOPT A NEW SUB-MACHINE-GUN: The Riesing gun, which was recently adopted by the U.S. Marine Corps, has been developed specially for use by paratroops, and it has already been used with great success in the Solomon Islands. The Riesing has a steel frame stock similar to our own Sten gun

COAL—THE LIFE-BLOOD OF BRITAIN'S WAR INDUSTRIES

The Problem of the Coal Industry has been Complicated by the Government's Confused Policy with Regard to Actual Production and also the Call-up for Army Service of Numbers of Miners. The Present Position with Regard to Output and Working Conditions is Here Thoroughly Reviewed

By CHARLES GRAVES

WITH the approach of winter and the rationing of fuel, most people must be feeling somewhat staggered at the thought that the coal industry is in such a poor state of health. Coal has been the foundation of this country's prosperity. As Mr. Lloyd George once said: "Coal is our real international coinage. We bring goods, raw materials and food from abroad; we pay in diamonds—only they are black."

During the whole of the nineteenth century the coal industry expanded continuously. Between 1893 and 1913 the number employed nearly doubled to over 1,000,000 people. Then came the 1914-18 war. Thousands of miners joined up. Thousands of other men found employment in the pits with exemption from military service, the latter dating from the beginning of 1916. The whole industry came under complete Government control in March 1917, and the Coal Control Department was established and continued in force until 1921.

It seems odd that the Government has not profited in this war by our experiences in the last. Once again, thousands of miners were allowed to join the Army, or were called up as Territorials in 1939. It was not until June 1941 that a stop was put on recruitment for the armed forces from the coal-mining industry, and over 30,000 men had to be drafted back into the industry from munition works and other industries. In addition, about 10,000 have been withdrawn from the Army and the Royal Air Force. But whereas in 1913 over 1,000,000 miners were employed in the coal industry, there were only about 750,000 in 1939.

This was due to a variety of reasons. First of all, the de-occupation of the Ruhr in 1924 brought fierce competition from the German coal-miners; the production of coal in Holland had increased from 2,000,000 tons in 1913 to 13,000,000 tons in 1934; Socialist leaders were encouraging the men to flout authority, until they started to flout their own leaders—with consequent strikes and reduction in output.

The fall of France might have been expected to ease the coal situation for the rest of the war. Until France fell we were exporting large quantities of coal across the Channel. When this market dried up, the Government was too short-sighted to realise that it was desirable to accumulate vast stocks of coal for our own needs. This trade having disappeared overnight, thousands of miners were thrown out of employment and were allowed to drift to other occupations. Many of these, it is true, have now returned to the coal-mines. But there is an annual wastage of 24,000 men in the coal industry, due to natural causes such as sickness and old age and to death or injury through accident.

According to the White Paper on the subject, there has been some tendency in recent discussions to exaggerate the gain in production which might be secured by checking absenteeism, and by additional effort on the part of the men, but recent pronouncements, both by the men's leaders and by Government spokesmen, show that these are, in fact, the root causes of the continuous fall in output.

It is now clear that the Government proposes to have full control over the operation of all coal-mines, and they have appointed an array of controllers and boards in the coal-fields and a National Coal Board in London. Coal-mining will be added to the list of priority industries which may be chosen in preference to military service, and absenteeism will in future be dealt with by regional investigation officers appointed by the Minister.

When this National Coal Board comes into operation, manufacturers will doubtless be compelled to buy any type of coal which the Government chooses to sell them, irrespective of its quality. This will, of course, save a great deal of transport, but may prove most unsatisfactory. It is possible, on the other hand, that the miners will feel that they are working for themselves and the country rather than for private owners. The fact remains that miners have a grievance because their sons and daughters make more money above ground than they do below it.

BRITAIN NOW MINES HER OUTCROP COAL: An excavator performs this task, without the aid of manual labour

Before its incorporation recently in the new Ministry of Fuel and Power, the Mines Department had turned its attention to new methods of increasing coal output. It found a way of achieving this without calling upon the depleted man-power of skilled miners. The process is known as the "opencast method": the main centre of the outcrop coal area lies in the West Riding of Yorkshire. For this method of winning the badly-needed fuel the Ministry made use of a new labour force and of equipment in no way suited for normal methods. In Yorkshire and other coal-fields, seams are to be found a short distance below the surface. This coal is not generally of much value, but as soon as it gets a few feet down it becomes worth while to work. By the new methods all the soil above the coal, called the "overburden" by the experts, is removed by mechanical excavators or giant scrapers drawn by powerful tractors

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this publication should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export

And now for a number of uncorrelated facts about this complicated industry. Seventy per cent. of coal is hewn mechanically, compared with 30 per cent. hewn by hand. Eighty-seven per cent. of the profits from coal-mining goes to the employees.

In the past it was natural for the royalty-owner to play up to the coal-owner; now that the royalties have been bought for £66,000,000 (less than fifteen years' purchase), the royalty-owner has no interest and might well be inclined to discourage the removal of coal from his property on the grounds of risk from subsidences.

Some absenteeism is only natural. The older men are bound to need more breaks than the young men whom they are replacing. On the other hand, persistent absenteeism to-day is most rife among the younger men.

Owners used to be short-sighted about canteens and pithead baths. Now these amenities are becoming increasingly widespread, but the hope that they would stimulate production is not being realised.

The background of bitterness between the coal-miners and the coal-owners dates back to the 1840's, when conditions were unquestionably bad—with pregnant women pulling tubs up and children working underground.

In 1913 there were 3,267 separate coal-mines in production in Britain, nearly half of which employed fewer than 100 men. To-day, the number of mines is about 2,000, but 80 per cent. of the output is produced by 130 undertakings.

The decline in British coal between 1918 and 1939 was a phase of the general problem of our basic industries all being dependent on the export trade, which is the life-blood of this country. There was no sound reason why unemployment figures in ship-building should have been greater even than those of the British coal industry at their worst. What was fundamentally wrong was that during the vital years in the struggle for world markets, Great Britain refused to adopt a national economic policy directed to the maintenance of our trade both abroad and at home, in face of foreign competition; instead, we were content with a policy for what amounted to unilateral economic disarmament on the lines of our attitude towards national defence.

Polish and German coal was subsidised to the extent of not less than 10s. per ton during the years of peace. Other fuels came into competition, many with substantial advantages over coal—such as the switch-over of the world's navies and mercantile ships from coal-burning to oil-burning. There was also the development of hydro-generation of power, but despite all this, there was an ever-increasing demand for coal.

Meantime, the public looks on helplessly at a situation which it feels should never have been allowed to arise. The National Council of Labour proposes Government control as the remedy, and James Griffiths, M.P., says: "The nation is fighting for its life. To save the nation, we must beat Hitler. To beat Hitler, we must have planes . . . and tanks . . . and guns. . . . To produce these, we must get coal. Why not begin a new chapter now? The miners and the Labour Movement have put forward proposals to the Government for the transformation of the industry into a real public service.

"If the Government read aright its lessons, they will not hesitate. The nation will acclaim such a decision. The miners will respond to such a call to service. The nation will get the coal that will produce the planes and tanks and guns, and in the midst of turmoil we shall take a step that will help to wipe out the memory of the shame of the last twenty years."

The spokesman of the Mining Association of Great Britain retorts that it is quite evident from the origin of these proposals that they are essentially political in character: "While the advocates of nationalisation may sincerely believe," he says, "that this step would improve efficiency and assist the war effort—a thesis which will be examined later in the light of past experience—they must recognise that a large body of opinion is convinced with equal sincerity that the results of nationalisation would be disastrous, and that to pursue the nationalisation campaign is bound therefore to create disunity extending far beyond the coal industry itself. This can only be detrimental to the war effort."

The Government have listened to the voice of Mr. Griffiths and have taken the industry under control. Still we get less coal.

So what? So you pay your money and take your choice!

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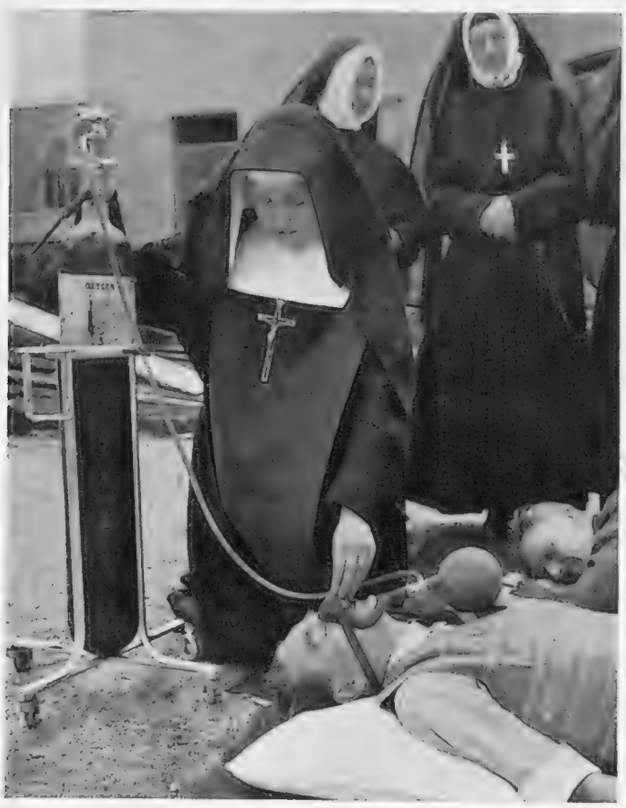
On a certain day in September, the *Arethusa* Training Ship drafted 30 more of its boys into the Royal Navy and 3 into the Merchant Navy, 33 equipped to commence a career of interesting and useful service to the nation. Their places are already filled with new recruits. Please send a gift to keep this good work going. Address: 164, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.C.2.

The COUNTRYSIDE in WARTIME

GETTING READY FOR NEXT YEAR'S FARMING RECORD: The Essex War Agricultural Committee is making strenuous efforts to get a return from every acre in the County. Derelict land, and land which has for years been covered with rough scrub is now being got ready for next year's great effort. In order to bring scrub-land under cultivation a new mechanised wonder is being used: In appearance it is something between a steam roller and a tank: it weighs 20 tons and develops 170 h.p. The gyro-cutters at the back will deal with an acre of rough ground in two hours. The scrub is torn from the ground and rotated round the knives until reduced to matchwood: this can then easily be raked off. After the removal of the scrub the rotating knives cut deeply into the land, as above

A WOMAN TO DIRECT THE TRAINS: Attractive Miss Eileen Kirkham is now a signalwoman at an L.M.S. station in the Midlands. Before volunteering for a railway-signals course, Miss Kirkham had been packer at a laundry, inspector in a factory, and an L.M.S. railway porter. Her present position is amongst the most responsible of all railway posts



FIRST-AID PRACTICE AT ROEHAMPTON: Administering oxygen to a "casualty" during an A.R.P. rehearsal held in the grounds of the Convent of the Sacred Heart

THE NUNS OF THE CONVENT OF THE SACRED HEART AT ROEHAMPTON witness a demonstration by A.R.P. experts on how to carry an unconscious person

***On right*—THE GIRLS' TRAINING CORPS IN CAMP: Dinner in the open air:** Two hundred girls of the Girls' Training Corps—drawn from companies from Wanstead, Epping, and other parts of Essex—have just experienced their first open-air camp. This was established at a Youth Training centre at Peckers, near Dunmow, which was opened by the Essex Higher Education Committee as part of their extensive Youth Service scheme. Apart from the Training Course undertaken by the girls whilst at the camp, they have found time to give the farmers of the locality a hand in the fields during harvest time

The World of Books—By Vernon Fane

WATCHDOGS OF THE CONVOYS

Corvettes are Tough Babies; New York a Hundred Years Ago; From the "Roaring '20's" to Dunkirk; George Augustus Sala

FOR the last seven months I have been hoping to see just such a book as Mr. Nicholas Monsarrat's H.M. CORVETTE (Cassell. 2s.). I specify the period because it was just about that long ago that I had some first-hand news about Corvettes myself, and came to admire those little ships that will "roll on wet grass," with such unqualified feeling.

Mr. Monsarrat was himself in Corvettes for two years. In peacetime he was an amateur yachtsman. From now on he is established as a writer of wit and sensibility, and, above all, as a first-rate reporter. By that I mean, as I said last week, not a specialist hired to do a temporary job, but a man who can translate his own knowledge and active experience into the simplest and most vivid words.

H.M. Corvette is full of good things. The writer has made no attempt at consecutive narrative; as he says himself, he had no time to write a masterpiece, and his book, also by his own admission, is less interesting than it might be owing to security reasons. But what has achieved publication is excellent.

"Discussion on the bridge, at the height of a gale, of how we came to be drafted to corvettes.

"CAPTAIN: 'I was told it would be like luxury motoring.'

"SELF: 'I was told I was damned lucky to get one.'

"VOICE OF ASDIC RATING: 'I was detailed off, sir.'"

Corvettes are the smallest ships, the shepherd dogs of a convoy, chasing stragglers, herding up laggards, grading their signals between "Can you squeeze a few more revs.?" and a forthright "Keep better station in future." One of their principal jobs is hunting submarines with depth-charges, but another is picking up survivors from torpedoed ships or from the U-boats themselves.

Once this Corvette came across a raft in a very rough sea, with three survivors clinging to it. Two were taken off, but the remaining man made no effort to reach the line thrown across the raft. "What's the matter with him?" I asked. "We can't do anything unless he wakes up and takes a hand himself." "He's awake all right," answered one of the rescued men, "but he can't move. Broken arm and leg. He told us to go first. He's the mate." Eventually they had to leave him. "As we drew away he waved to us: not a summons but a sort of half-salute. Then he lay down again."

"When I am ashore, and hear (as I have done) one man telling another that he can get as much petrol as he wants, by licensing all four of his cars and only using one of them . . . when I see a letter to a newspaper complaining that the writer has had difficulty in obtaining extra petrol for the grouse-shooting season . . . this is what I think of. A torpedoed tanker ablaze at sea, with all its accompanying horrors.

"That's your extra ten gallons of petrol, sir and madam: that's last week's little wangle with the garage on the corner. You might remember what you're burning, now and then: its real basic coupon is a corpse-strewn Atlantic."

Often for a fortnight at a time, if no worse happens to them, the men who go to sea in Corvettes are never out of their soaked clothing, never lie on a dry bed, never have a hot meal. Their job is protecting a convoy, and valiantly they do it. Small wonder that the author can write, and we can appreciate the words: "Why not be proud? Destroyers are all right, of course; but Corvettes are the tough babies, and we're in Corvettes."

It is difficult to pass from as moving a little book as this to fiction, but it is made easier when the subject of the novel is as remote from our present-day lives as the New York of the 1830's, and when that theme is treated with so much briskness and colour as in Mr. Walter D Edmonds's YOUNG AMES (Collins. 9s. 6d.).

The redoubtable Mr. Ames comes into our view as the most junior of all the clerks in a downtown shipping firm, and, by the exercise of considerable ingenuity, ends up with a small but perfectly formed fortune after two years.

This is, in other words, a success story, but not of the banal magazine type, because the author's research into 100-year-old New York history makes it a good deal more than that; his zest and the racy impulse of his writing do the rest.

Having established his character as one of the earlier but not the least attractive "tough guys" in American history, Mr. Edmonds proceeds to illustrate his theme in a series of episodes strung together on the thread of young Ames's native wit and effrontery.

As an understrapper in an established and dignified firm, young Ames proceeds to negotiate, occasionally on the firm's behalf, occasionally on his own, but always on the credit side of the ledger, and always with an integrity that stops just a fraction this side of the Boy Scout standard, but apparently satisfies everyone else, including young Ames.

I particularly enjoyed in this book, and hope you will, the rip-roaring accounts that it contains of gang fights with the "Plug-Uglies" out, of racing fire-engines to the wharves, of bribing steamboat captains in a race for New Orleans, and of the great New York fire of that time. It isn't the kind of book to dip into with any equanimity—it's the kind to read from cover to cover with a good deal of excitement and no social conscience at all.

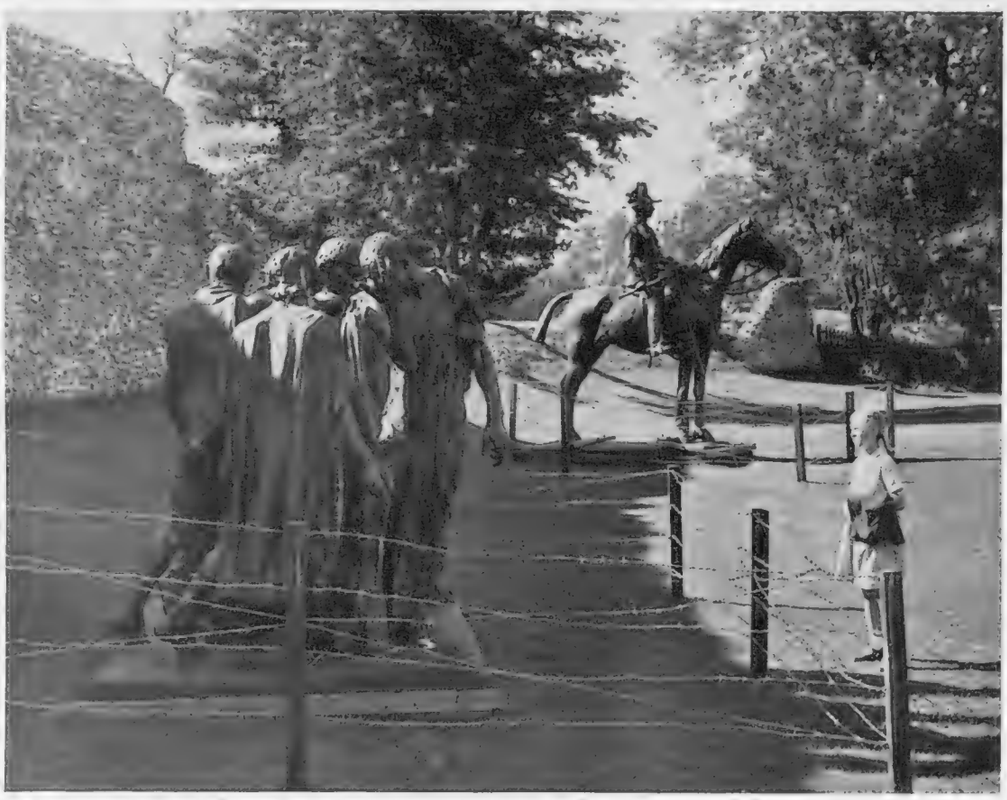
SOLDIER FROM THE WARS RETURNING (Chapman and Hall. 9s. 6d.) is the story of a family which begins with a mother, widowed in her early thirties, with a boy and a girl of school age. It occurs at a date which enables Mr. Jerrard Tickell to secure that the completion of the young people's education and their subsequent love-stories should be enveloped by the vicissitudes of a war in which, at their age, they would be called upon to take a decisive part.

Nicolas, therefore, returns shot-up and dazed from Dunkirk into the arms of his Antonia, while Victoria's heart leaps to the sound of an aeroplane engine, since her Patrick is somewhere up there fighting the Battle of Britain. That Patrick Coolavin is an Oxford Don who, before the war, so hated the internal-combustion engine that he went to extraordinary lengths to avoid them, adds poignancy and drama to that situation. That Nicolas should have been bombed and machine-gunned, up to his neck in the sea, thereby fulfilling a Dunne-like nightmare recurring since childhood, also touches up the drama. That Antonia and Nicolas should be in the kind of frustrated relationship of passionate non-fulfilment (a theme well-worn by Mr. Charles Morgan), also adds piquancy to the story.

I am not sure whether Mr. Tickell quite meant the character of Caroline Horton, the mother, to dominate the book, but she does. Maybe he understands this type of woman, who graduated into café-and-illustrated-paper-society in the roaring '20's; who was brought face to face with realities on the death of an improvident husband, and by force of character and the happy coincidence of having met and worked for Algernon Westwall, managed to pull things through for herself and her children. Caroline stands out boldly by her own right of character, but the portrait is assisted by an excursion into fantasy on the part of the author in the shape of the Golden Hind Travelling Agency. The episode of Caroline and the six bankers in Budapest, at the time of the collapse of the pound, may make good reading, but it has more than a touch of the fantastic.

But then, Mr. Tickell is not at his surest when he is ruminating upon things like gold standards, bankers, international politics and general trends. While sympathising with his object, which is to provide the background for the inevitable tragedy which is to overtake his young people, and while he puts considerable force and vigour into his comments, much of its effectiveness is dissipated by overstatement. Nor does it help that an unnecessary streak of anti-Semitism runs all through it.

Apart from these defects, *Soldier from the Wars Returning* is a very readable novel and, in some of its high spots, it is deeply moving.



LONDON'S EVACUATED STATUES IN THEIR COUNTRY HOME: "The Burghers of Calais" from Victoria Gardens, and "Field-Marshal Lord Wolseley" from the Horse Guards Parade: The wartime home of some of London's more artistic statues is in the grounds of a ruined castle in the Home Counties, near Berkhamsted. They have been taken away as a precaution against damage by air raids. Among the kings evacuated to the country are "George III" from Cockspur Street, and "William III" from St. James's Square. London children, evacuated to the same area, can now learn their history on the spot!

What a lovely, juicy subject for a biography is George Augustus Sala, for in him can be discovered the beginnings of modern journalism, and attendant upon his flamboyant personality are all the sights, sounds, smells, exuberances, extravagances and miserable conditions of the Victorian era.

SALA, by Ralph Straus (Constable. 18s.), would be a good source-book for anyone seeking to discover the reasons for the rise and ascendancy of the individual in modern journalism. Possibly Sala was the first example of a man of his type triumphing over the established prerogatives of the well-educated. It was Sala who made Edgar Wallace possible, and some of the prolific and highly-successful practitioners on both sides of the Atlantic might be surprised to find in him a progenitor.

Mr. Ralph Straus might have made almost anything out of this life. It would be a glorious opportunity, for instance, to caricature someone who, in his day, was God's gift to all caricaturists. He might also have been tempted to deploy his portrait before a luscious background of Victorian Bohemianism. That Sala was eminently caricaturable, and that the Bohemian background is inescapable, does not deter Mr. Straus from sticking to an almost classically-objective attitude to his subject. We get, then, a satisfying and completely-clear portrait of a none-too-easy sitter, which is what a good biography should be.

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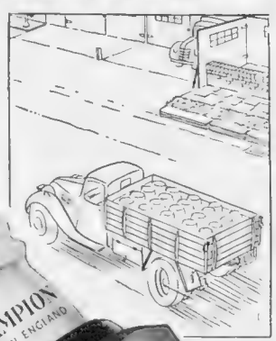

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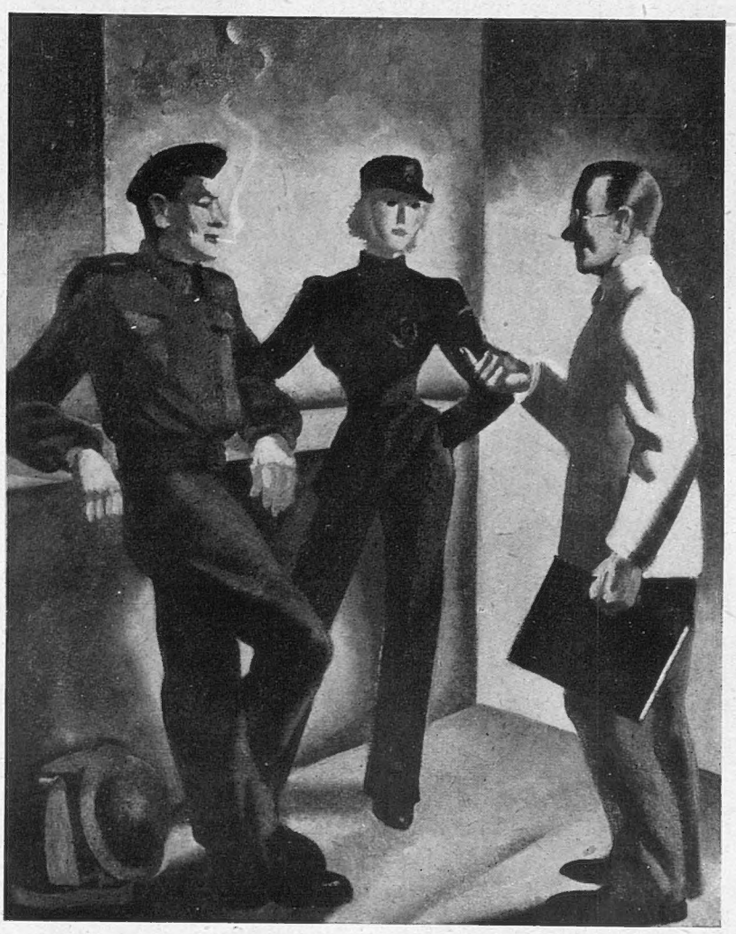

TO-DAY the nation is in uniform — dungarees and battle dress for the fighting services, standard suits for civilians. Yet though the gay colours, the frills and flounces of peace have temporarily gone, our war-time clothes still bear equal evidence of the work of the chemist. The raw textile fibres must still be cleansed, then treated with oils specially selected for each type of fibre. Otherwise they would be torn to shreds by the complicated machinery through which they must pass. And they must still be dyed and finished. This finishing or final dressing of wool, rayon or cotton is possibly even more important for active service dress than for peace-time clothes. Chemicals in huge quantities are still required by the textile industries of Great Britain. The processes devised and controlled by the chemist continue to work at high pressure. But many raw materials on which these formerly depended are no longer available. Extra effort must be made in the research laboratories to discover and develop fresh methods or materials. Out of this necessity will emerge not only the substitutes necessitated by war conditions but entirely new products, having novel properties which will ensure them a place in the post-war world. It is the chemist's privilege that in attempting to solve the problems of To-day he frequently discovers a key to To-morrow.

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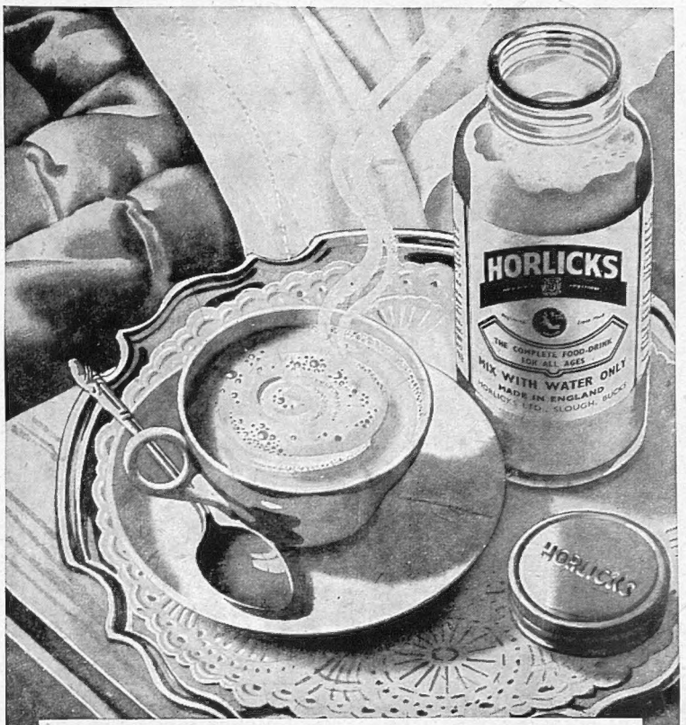

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